

D.-A.-F. DE SADE

LA NOUVELLE JUSTINE

*OU*

LES MALHEURS DE LA VERTU

Translated by Patrick Kearney

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## CHAPTER XI (CONTINUED)

### Continuation of the History of Jérôme

“The first time one finds oneself alone after having been together for so very long, it seems as though something is missing from existence. Fools take this for the effects of love; they are mistaken. The pain felt in that emptiness is nothing but the effect of habit, and a contrary habit dispels it far more quickly than one imagines. By the second day of my journey, I was no longer thinking of Joséphine; or if her image did present itself to my eyes, it was accompanied by the symptoms of a kind of cruel pleasure, far more voluptuous than those of love or tenderness. She is dead, I would say to myself, dead in dreadful torments, and it is I who delivered her up. This delicious thought then aroused in me such movements of pleasure that I was often obliged to have the carriage stopped in order to fuck my postilion in the arse.

I was in the environs of Trent, entirely alone in my carriage and directing my route toward Italy, when one of those fits of temperament seized me... at the very moment I heard plaintive cries in the forest we were passing through: “Stop,” I said to the postilion, “I want to know the cause of that noise; do not stray, and take care of my carriage.” I plunged in, pistol in hand, and at last discovered in a thicket a girl of fifteen or sixteen, who appeared to me of rare beauty. “What misfortune afflicts you, my fair young lady?” I said, approaching her. “Is it possible to remedy it?” “Oh! no, no, monsieur,” she replied, “never was there remedy for the stains of honor; I am a ruined girl, I expect nothing but death, and it is that I beg of you.” — “But, mademoiselle, if you

would deign to tell me—” — “The matter is as simple as it is cruel, monsieur. A young man falls in love with me; this attachment displeases my brother; the barbarian abuses the authority that the death of our parents gives him; he abducts me, and after having horribly ill-treated me, he abandons me in this forest, forbidding me, on pain of my life, ever to return home: that monster is capable of anything; he will kill me if I go back. Oh! monsieur, I do not know what will become of me. And yet you offer me your services... well, I accept them; deign to go and fetch my lover for me, do this, monsieur, I beg you; I know not your station nor your fortune, but my lover is rich, and if money were necessary, I am quite sure he would give it to have me back.” — “Where is he, this lover, mademoiselle?” I said eagerly. — “At Trent, and you are not two leagues from it.” — “Does he suspect your misfortune?” — “I do not think he knows of it yet.” — And here I saw clearly that this beautiful girl, at present without any defense, would be mine whenever I pleased; but, as greedy for money as for women, I at once began to devise how I might obtain both at once. “Do you believe,” I first said to this unfortunate creature, “that there are any houses in the vicinity of this part of the wood where we are?” — “No, monsieur, I do not think so.” — “Very well, then go deeper still into the thicket, make not the slightest movement, copy onto these tablets with my pencil the three lines I am about to dictate to you, and in a few hours I will bring you your lover.”

Here are the words that the beautiful adventuress wrote down as I dictated them: “A brave stranger will enable you to see for yourself the extent of my misfortunes; they are dreadful; follow him, he will lead you to where I am waiting for you; but come alone, absolutely alone—this is essential; you will soon learn why; if two thousand *sequins* do not seem to you too meagre a reward for the man who brings us together, bring them to give to him in my presence; you may bring more, if you find the reward too meagre.”

The fair oppressed girl, whose name was Héloïse, signed the note, and I, quickly regaining my carriage, urged the postilion to make haste, and had him stop at the very door of the young Alberoni, Héloïse's lover. I presented the note to him. "Two thousand sequins!" he cried, embracing me, "two thousand sequins to have news of all that I hold most dear in the world! oh! no, no, monsieur, it is not enough—here is double; let us go, I beg you; I had just learned of the departure of the one I love, of her brother's anger, and I did not know where to direct my steps to find them again; you inform me—what do I not owe you? Let us go, monsieur, and let us go alone, since she requires it." Here I checked for a few moments the haste of this young man, to make him observe that, after the fury of Héloïse's brother, it must not be to Trent that he should take this beautiful girl back; "take with you as much money as you can," I said to him, "leave the territory of this city, and bind yourself forever to the one you love; reflect well on it, monsieur; any other course will cause you to lose her forever." Alberoni, persuaded by my reasoning, thanked me, and, opening his cabinet in haste, took upon himself all the gold and jewels he possessed. "Let us go now," he said to me, "I have enough to keep her living splendidly for a year, in whatever city of Germany or Italy it may be, and in the space of a year many affairs may be settled." Satisfied with this prudent resolution, I approved it; I had my carriage taken to the inn, despite Alberoni's insistence that it remain at his house. We sped away.

Héloïse had not stirred; "imprudent man," I said to Alberoni, pressing the muzzle of a pistol to his temple, and without giving him time to utter a word, "how could you be so foolish as to entrust at once, into the hands of a man you do not know, both your mistress and your money? Lay down at once what you are carrying, and go bear into the bosom of hell the eternal remorse of your imprudence." Alberoni tried to make a movement—I stretched him at my feet; Héloïse fell fainting.



“Oh! God damn it,” I said to myself then, “here I am, by the most delicious of crimes, master of a charming girl and a fine sum of money; let us amuse ourselves now; others than I might perhaps have taken advantage of their victim’s fainting to enjoy her more calmly; I thought very differently: I should have been distressed if that unfortunate girl had not retained full possession of her senses, so as to taste her misfortune all the better. My perfidious imagination was moreover preparing for her certain episodes, of which I wished to make her drain the cup to the dregs. When one goes so far as to commit evil, it must be done with all the extent... all the refinement of which it is capable.”

I gave my Héloïse smelling salts, I slapped her, I pinched her; as nothing managed to wake her, I lifted her up, I tickled her clitoris, and it was to this voluptuous sensation that I owed her return to consciousness. “Come now, fair maiden,” I said to her then, pressing a fiery kiss upon her lips, “take heart; you must have courage to endure the end of your misfortunes, for you are not yet at the end of them.” — “Oh, villain!” said this charming girl, weeping, “what more do you intend, and what new torments have you prepared for me? Is it not enough to have abused my trust to deprive me of all I love? Ah! If it is only death that you threaten me with, hasten to grant it to me; hurry to reunite me with the beloved object of my heart; I will forgive your crime at that price.”

“The death you desire, my angel,” I said, as I began to caress my beauty, “will most certainly come to pass; but it must be preceded by a few humiliations, a few cruelties, without which I would take far less pleasure in granting it to you;” and as I spoke, my hands, still groping, revealed to my eager gaze thighs of such a roundness... of dazzling whiteness, I put an end to my words to concern myself only with deeds. The certainty I had of the first fruits of such a beautiful girl made me think of a kind of assault which, perhaps otherwise, would never have occurred to me. Good heavens! What tightness, what difficulty, what heat, and what pleasure this victory gave me; the manner in which I

wrested it from her lent it even greater spice. An alabaster throat presented itself to me, and, more inclined to insults than to caresses in the state I was in, I bit it, I squeezed it, instead of kissing it. O marvellous workings of nature! Héloïse, singularly favoured by it, yields—despite her pain—to the sensations of pleasure I force upon her; she comes. There is nothing in the world that kindles in me the feeling of lustful rage more fiercely than to feel a woman sharing my pleasures. “You vile whore,” I cried, “you shall be punished for your audacity”; and turning her over hastily, I took possession of the most charming behind it was possible to behold. One hand parted her buttocks, the other guided my cock, and I sodomised her at once. Gods! What pleasure she gave me! I was hurting her; she wanted to scream, I put a handkerchief over her mouth; this precaution disrupted the act, my member slipped; I realised I had to lift my victim and prop her up against something; I laid her on her lover’s corpse, and brought them together so well through the position I made them assume that their mouths found themselves, so to speak, glued together; one cannot imagine the terror, the horror, the despair into which this new episode plunges my victim; little moved by the various convulsions tearing her apart, I make a rope out of my suspenders and my handkerchief; I secure her in this position, and calmly set to work again. Gods! What a bottom! What plumpness! Such whiteness! A thousand and a thousand kisses are pressed upon it; it seems as though I wish to devour this beautiful arse before I fuck it; I finally pierce it, but with such haste, so little care, that blood flows down her thighs; nothing stops me, I’m right at the back, I wish she were tighter, and I much thicker to torment her even more. “Well then!” I said, pounding into her with all my might, “will this second climax make you come just as hard as the last?” And as I said this, I slapped her buttocks vigorously; I scratched them; my hands moved round to the front and savagely tore away the fine downy hair with which nature had adorned her. A thousand cruel

thoughts now trouble my imagination; I resolve to delay my release, so that nothing may dampen the fire that inspires them; I recall the dreadful plan hatched over the corpse of Madame de Moldane... I recall everything I have been told about the pleasures of a freshly murdered corpse and the despair into which the impetuosity of my desires cast me, preventing me in the past from committing that crime; I pull down his trousers, I cast wild glances at Alberoni's blood-soaked body; I pull down his trousers, he was still warm; I see superb buttocks, I kiss them; it is with my tongue that I prepare the way; I penetrate him, and find the experience so pleasurable that it is in the arse of the lover I have murdered, whilst kissing that of the mistress whom I shall soon murder in the same way, that it is there, I say, that with indescribable shudders of pleasure, my cum gushes forth in great waves.

Héloïse's charms, her despair, her tears, the state of anxiety into which I plunged her soul through the threats with which I overwhelmed her—the combination of so many factors that had such a powerful effect on my heart of iron—soon made me hard again; but, filled with rage, foaming with that lustful fury which plunges our senses into such violent agitation, it is now only through insults that I can arouse myself to pleasure. I gather branches from the thicket surrounding us, fashion them into rods, strip this young woman completely naked, and lash her all over her body, not sparing her breasts, so cruelly that her blood soon mingles with that from her lover's wounds. Sated with this barbarity, I invent new torments: I force her to suck the wounds of Alberoni. Seeing her obey me with a sort of delicacy, I pluck thorns and rub them against her most delicate parts; I thrust them into her vagina, I tear her nipples; finally, I cut open the young man's corpse; I tear out his heart to smear my victim's face with it; I force her to bite off a few pieces. I could take no more; and the proud Jérôme, who had just been laying down the law to two men, was at that moment receiving it in his cock: such violence has never been witnessed. Driven by the need to

spurt my cum, I force my victim to take her lover's cock into her mouth; and I fuck her in that state. I held a dagger in my hand; I intended to kill her the moment I came... she draws nearer; I bring my thrusts forward; it is only slowly that I wish to make her receive the final one. Meanwhile, I caressed, with delight, the voluptuous idea of mingling the final gasps of the woman I was killing with the divine throes of my own release. She will feel, I thought as I thrust into her with all my might, she will experience the cruellest moments of a man's life, whilst I savour the sweetest. Delirium seizes my senses; I seize her by the hair with one hand, and with the other I plunge a dagger into her breast, her lower belly and her heart, fifteen times over; she breathes her last, and my cum has not yet been spilled. It was then, my friends, that I truly experienced what a marvellous effect it is to slit the throat of the object one is fucking. My victim's anus tightened and contracted due to the violence of the blows I was striking; and when I pierced her heart, the contraction was so fierce that my cock was torn apart. O delightful pleasure! You were the first I had ever tasted of this sort; but how indebted I am to you for the lesson you taught me, and how much I have benefited from it since! A moment's rest follows such intense agitation; but in a soul as wicked as mine, the sight of the crime must soon rekindle the desire. "I have defiled the lover's corpse," I said to myself, "why should I not defile the mistress's?" Héloïse was still beautiful; the pallor of her complexion, the dishevelled state of her lovely hair, the intense passion that reigned over the contorted features of her enchanting face—all of it made me hard again; I sodomised her and came one last time, devouring her flesh.

Once the illusion had dissipated, I gathered up the jewels and the money and withdrew—not detesting my crime: ah! had I repented of it, would it have made me hard so many times since?... No, I did not detest that delicious crime; but I greatly regretted not having given it a more violent extension.

I rejoined my carriage and set off at once for Venice. The climate of the region of Trent and the character of its inhabitants having displeased me, I resolved upon Sicily. "There," I said, "is the cradle of tyranny and cruelty: what poets and writers relate of the ferocity of the ancient natives of that island leads me to believe that I shall find some traces of their vices among the descendants of the Lestrygonians, the Cyclopes, and the Lotophagi.<sup>1</sup> You shall see whether I was mistaken, and whether the priests, the nobles, and the wealthy merchants of this delightful island do not possess all that is needed to give us a sufficient idea of the depravity and ferocity of their ancestors." Filled with this plan, I crossed all of Italy; and, aside from a few lustful episodes, a few dark and secret crimes to which I gave myself in order to keep my hand in, nothing befell me that, comparable to what remains for me to tell you, deserves to detain your attention here.

I embarked at Naples in the middle of September, on a pretty little merchant vessel bound for Messina, and in which chance afforded me the opportunity for a gratuitous crime, as singular as it was piquant. We had with us a female merchant from Naples, whose business was taking her to Sicily, and who brought along two charming little girls, of whom she was the mother, whom she had nursed, and whom she loved to the point of never being able to part from them; the elder might have been fourteen, with a romantic face, the most beautiful blond hair, and the most agreeable figure. The charms of her sister, younger by eighteen months, were of an entirely different kind; features more piquant than the other's, less tenderness, if one wishes, but infinitely more stimulus; in short, all that was needed not to seduce gently like her sister, but to carry by storm the most reluctant heart in love. Hardly had I set eyes on these two girls than I resolved to sacrifice them; to enjoy them was difficult; idols of

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<sup>1</sup> "Everywhere," says Bridoine in his interesting journey through Sicily, "where the air is heavily impregnated with fiery exhalations, the inhabitants are exceedingly wicked and depraved."

their mother, and constantly under her eyes, the moment of attack would not have been easy to seize. There remained to me the means of making them victims; and the pleasure of stopping the course of existence of two such pretty little creatures was worth even more than that of rendering it agreeable to them by the knowledge of pleasures. My pocket, always furnished with five or six kinds of poisons, offered me different ways to deprive them of life; but the blow, in my view, would not have been so keen for a tender mother who idolized her daughters: I wanted a more striking death, infinitely more sudden; the bosom of the waves on which we floated presented me with a sepulchre in which I preferred to engulf them. These two young persons had the imprudence (and I was much surprised that they had not yet been prevented from it) of going to sit on the edge of the deck while the crew took their midday rest. On the third day of our crossing, I seized the moment; I approached them; and, lifting them both in my arms, preventing their hands from clinging to me, I hurled them with a vigorous arm into the salty element that was to bury them forever. The sensation was so vivid that I discharged in my breeches. The noise awakens everyone; I pretend to rub my eyes and to be the first to perceive who the victims of this accident are; I rush to the mother. "Oh! madam," I say to her, "your daughters are lost." — "What are you saying?" — "An imprudence... they were on the deck... a gust of wind... they are lost, madam! they are lost!" One cannot depict the grief experienced by that unfortunate woman; never, I think, was nature more eloquent or more pathetic; and, conversely, never did more voluptuous impressions shake my senses. When she came to herself, this woman gave me all her confidence; she was landed in a dreadful state; I took lodging in the same inn: feeling her end approaching, she entrusted me with her portfolio, begging me to send it back to her family; I promised everything and kept nothing. Six hundred thousand francs, which that portfolio contained, were an object considerable enough that,

with my principles, I did not let them escape; and the unfortunate Neapolitan woman, who died the day after our arrival at Messina, soon left me to enjoy them in peace. I had but one regret, I confess; it was not to have fucked her before her death; still beautiful and very unhappy, she had inspired in me the most violent desire; but I feared to lose her confidence; and, on this occasion, I admit, where it concerned only a woman, avarice prevailed over lust.

I had no other recommendations in Messina than the bills of exchange with which I had provided myself at Venice, where I had taken the prudent precaution, on account of the difference in currencies, of converting my cash into paper payable in Sicily. The banker who discounted them for me showed me more politeness than Sicilians receive when they present themselves for the same purpose to bankers in Paris; and this is a justice I must render to the perfect civility of all the foreign merchants with whom I have dealt: a bill of exchange drawn upon them becomes a letter of recommendation, and the most sincere... the most repeated offers always accompany, in a moral sense, the obligations that their correspondents undertake with them in a material one.

I informed my banker of the desire I had to purchase a seigneurial estate with the considerable funds of which I found myself possessed. "The feudal system is here in all its vigor," I said to that worthy man; "that alone determines me to settle here; I wish at once to command men and cultivate the land, to dominate equally over my fields and over my vassals."—"In that case, you could not do better than in Sicily," my correspondent replied; "there are estates here where the lord has the right of life and death over his inhabitants."—"That is precisely what I need," I answered; and, not to dwell further on these details, you shall know, my friends, that at the end of a month I found myself lord of ten parishes, in possession of the finest estate and the most beautiful castle, in the valley of the ruins of Syracuse, very

near the gulf of Catania—that is to say, in the most beautiful country in all Sicily.

I did not delay in forming for myself a numerous household, composed according to my tastes. My valets, my women, all had the immediate service of my lusts as a special clause of their duties. My housekeeper, named Dona Clementia, a woman of about thirty-six, and one of the most beautiful creatures on the island, had, in addition to her libertine attentions to me, the charge of procuring subjects of both sexes; and during all the time she exercised this role near my person, I assure you she never let me lack for them. Before settling, I traveled through the celebrated cities of this interesting region; and, as you may well imagine, Messina had the first claim on my inquiries. The descriptions of Theocritus concerning the pleasures of Sicily had not a little contributed to awakening in me the desire to inhabit so beautiful a country. I found true all that he says about the mildness of the climate, the beauty of its inhabitants, and particularly their libertinism. It is there, without doubt, under that delightful sky, that beneficent nature inspires in man all the tastes, all the passions that can contribute to rendering his existence agreeable; and it is there that one must enjoy them, if one wishes to know the true measure of the happiness that this tender mother reserves for her children. After likewise visiting Catania and Palermo, I returned to take possession of my *château*. Seated upon a lofty mountain, I there enjoyed at once the purest air and the most agreeable view. This appearance of a fortress, moreover, infinitely flattered the severity of my tastes. “The objects I shall immolate to them,” I said to myself, “will be there as in a prison: at once their master, their judge, and their executioner, where will they find defenders? Oh! how divine are pleasures when despotism and tyranny thus goad them!”

Clementia had taken care to fill my harem during my absence; and, on my return, I found it stocked, by her hand, with twelve young boys aged between ten and eighteen, the most handsome in the world, and an equal number of girls, of roughly



the same age: they were all replaced every month; and I leave it to you to imagine, my friends, into what luxuriant excesses I plunged. One cannot imagine the methods I employed... the savagery with which I assailed them: my adventure in Trente had so thoroughly accustomed me to bloodthirsty pleasures that I could no longer do without them. Cruel by inclination, by temperament, by necessity, I could not indulge in any pleasure that did not bear the mark of the brutal passion that consumed me. At first I directed my atrocities solely at women; the weakness of that sex, its gentleness, its amiability, its delicacy seemed to me all the more certain grounds for the outbursts of my barbarity; I soon realised my mistake; I felt that it was infinitely more pleasurable to reap the ears of corn that resisted than the tender grass bending beneath the scythe, and that if this thought had not occurred to me until then, it was more out of false restraint than out of refinement. I tried it. The first young lad I murdered, aged fifteen and as beautiful as love itself, gave me such intense pleasures that my blows were henceforth directed far more towards that class than the other: it seemed that I despised women too much to make them my victims, and that just as young boys, through their charms, were bound to give me more sensual pleasures, so too must they be more delightful to torment. According to this theory, which was borne out by the facts, not a week went by without my sacrificing three or four of them, and always by new and different torments. Sometimes I would release a couple into a large park, surrounded by high walls, from which it was impossible to escape; there, I would hunt them down like hares; I would search for them, riding through my park on horseback, and when I had caught them, I would hang them from trees by iron collars; a great fire was lit beneath them, which consumed them bit by bit; at other times I made them run before my horse, and lashed them hard across the loins with my whip; if they fell, I had my steed trample them in the belly, or I blew their brains out with a pistol. Often, I employed even more refined tortures, the execution of which was only proper

in the shadow and silence of the private chamber; and always, during these proceedings, the faithful Clementia would incite me, or direct scenes of lewdness, in which her prettiest girls became the leading actresses. Fortunately, I had found in this Clementia all the qualities necessary for the savage and dissolute life I had adopted. The minx was wicked, lustful, intemperate, and an atheist; she possessed, in a word, all my vices, and no virtue other than that of being incredibly devoted to me and serving me marvellously. I was thus leading, in that castle and through the care of that charming girl, the most delightful life of high society, perfectly suited to my tastes, when fickleness—at once the scourge and the very soul of all pleasures—came to tear me away from that peaceful abode, to cast me back onto the great stage of this world's adventures.

When difficulties no longer sharpen enjoyment, one grows jaded; one seeks to heighten it by pains; it is truly only through them that one attains great pleasures. I left Clementia in my château and returned to establish myself in Messina. The rumour that a wealthy young man had come to reside in that capital soon spread, and opened to me the doors of every palace where there were daughters to be married: I quickly discovered the intention, and resolved to amuse myself with it.

Of all those houses in which people affected to receive me with kindness, that of the cavalier Rocupero fixed my attention most particularly. This old nobleman and his wife together might well have made up a century between them; the mediocrity of their fortune caused them to raise and support, with far too great an economy, the three most beautiful daughters nature had ever created. The first was named Camille; she was twenty, dark-haired, with a dazzlingly white complexion, the most expressive eyes, the most agreeable mouth, and the very figure of Hebe herself. The second, more engaging though less beautiful, was only eighteen; her hair was chestnut, her large blue eyes, full of languor, breathed at once love and voluptuousness; her figure, rounded and well-filled, promised the greatest delight; she was

called Véronique; and, indeed, I should have preferred her not only to Camille but to all the world, were it not for the celestial charms of Laurence, who, though scarcely fifteen years old, surpassed in beauty both her sisters and the most beautiful women in all Sicily.

Hardly had I been introduced into the house of this worthy gentleman than I resolved to bring into it at once disorder, desolation, impurity, dishonour, and all the scourges of crime and despair. Probity reigned in that household; beauty and virtue seemed likewise to have established their empire there; was anything more needed to inflame in me the desire to sully it with every imaginable outrage? I began with gifts, which were accepted only with reluctance; but the intentions of alliance that I soon made known no longer permitted any refusal. I was asked to explain these intentions. "How would you have me choose among the three Graces?" I replied. "Give me time to become better acquainted with your charming daughters, and I shall then be able to tell you which one is to fix my heart." Matters being thus arranged, you may easily imagine that I took advantage of the delay to corrupt all three. As I had recommended the strictest secrecy to them, they took care not to confess to one another what I communicated to each, so that none of them knew how far I had gone with her companion. From that moment, this is how I conducted myself.

Camille was the first I seduced; and having deceived her with the most promising hopes of marriage, after a month I had taken everything I wanted from her. How beautiful she was! And what delights I experienced at her disposal! No sooner had I had my way with her in every manner than I set my sights on Véronique; and, stirring up Camille's jealousy, I turned her so strongly against her sister that she resolved to stab her. The fiery temperament of Sicilian women admits of all manner of bloody deeds; there, one knows but two passions: vengeance and love. As soon as I felt quite certain of Camille's criminal intentions, I had Véronique warned; I managed to enlighten her to such an extent

that I left her not even the consoling thought of doubt. This beautiful girl, in despair, though more timid than bold, begged me to take her away, if I loved her, in order to save her from the unbridled fury of a sister whom she knew capable of anything. "My angel," I said then, "would it not be better to go back to the source of all this, identify the culprits, and take our revenge directly?" — "There is no other cause," replied Véronique, "than the extreme love Camille has for you; she realises the favour you show me, and that infernal creature is plotting against my life!" — "I do not quite see things as you do in this matter," I replied. "Have no doubt, my dear soul, that your parents give Camille every preference over you. I do not know if that girl loves me; what is certain is that I have never given her any hope." "But your parents have spoken to me more directly: do not doubt that Camille is the sole object of their attachment; were I to declare to them my preference for you, I should most certainly be refused. You propose flight; that course would be dangerous; we should put ourselves in the wrong with your parents, and either they or the law would take notice of it, and the punishment would soon be the loss of our fortunes or of our lives. There is, it seems to me, a course more advantageous and more simple: let us avenge ourselves at once on Camille, who is plotting against your life, and on your parents who incite her to it." — "And what is that means?" — "The one that nature offers at every step in the happy country where we are." — "Poison?" — "Undoubtedly." — "Poison my father, my mother, and my sister?" — "Are they not conspiring against you?" — "I have only the suspicion." — "The proof will be your death." Then Véronique, after a moment's reflection, resumed: — "I know that other women have acted in the same way: Dona Capraria has just poisoned her husband." — "What then holds you back, my dear?" — "The fear of your contempt; you will be more cold-blooded after the revenge; you will think less of me." — "Do not fear it; I shall recognize in you then an ardent, courageous, loving, passionate girl—a girl of character, in a word—and for that very reason I

shall adore you a thousand times more ardently. Do not hesitate, Véronique, or you will lose my heart forever.” — “Oh my friend! but Heaven!” — “Idle fears; Heaven has never meddled in the affairs of the world, and that spring is no longer in the hands of man except as the blunted weapon of falsehood and superstition. There is no God; and the punishments or rewards founded on that odious phantom are as contemptible as it is. Ah! if there were a God whom crime offended, would he give man all the means of committing it? No—more than that: if crime offended that supposed author of nature, could it be essential to nature’s laws? Reflect, then, that this depraved nature feeds and sustains itself only through crimes; and that, if crimes are necessary, they can offend neither nature nor the imaginary being you suppose to govern it. What man has dared to call crime is nothing but the action that disturbs the laws of society; but what do the laws of society matter to nature—was it she who dictated them? and do not those laws vary from climate to climate? However dreadful you may suppose an action to be, the crime with which you think it invested can therefore be only local; from that moment it cannot offend nature, whose laws are universal. Parricide, regarded as a crime in Europe, is honoured in several regions of Asia: it is the same with all other human actions; I defy you to cite me a single one that is universally vicious. Reflect, moreover, that it is only a question here of defending yourself, and that then all the means you are about to employ to achieve it not only cannot be criminal, but even become virtuous, since the first law that nature inspired in us was to preserve ourselves at whatever cost and by whatever means it may be: act, Véronique, act, or you are yourself lost.”

The fire I saw shining in the eyes of that charming girl soon convinced me of the success of my arguments. “Well,” she said to me after a few minutes of violent agitation, “well, Jérôme, I will do as you say; I know the necessary drugs. All these plants are familiar to us here; I swear to you that within three days not one of those who plot our ruin will remain alive. Keep away

during that time; I do not want you to be suspected.” I agreed all the more readily, as I needed that interval to seduce the third sister. This task was entrusted to Clementia; I had her come to Messina, introduced her to Laurence, and the very next day she was taken to my château. She had not been gone two hours when the thunderbolts prepared by Véronique struck. She had used the juice of thora, a species of very dangerous aconite that grows abundantly in the mountains of Sicily, and the three victims died in dreadful convulsions. Once the deed was done, she seized everything she could—jewels, pocketbook, casket; nothing was left behind—and came to find me, with these paltry riches, at a country house near the town where I had arranged to meet her. It was she who told me of her sister’s disappearance, the cause of which she could not understand. “You shall see her again soon,” I said to her; “I thought it prudent to place her somewhere safe; let us go, she is waiting for us at my country house.” This precaution at first seemed to trouble Véronique; I reassured her. But I leave you to imagine what became of her when, upon arriving, she learned from Laurence’s own lips the manner in which she had been abducted, and all that Clementia had been saying to her since she had been in my château. “O scoundrel! you have deceived me,” she said. “No, truly,” I replied, “I never promised you anything; your sister inspired in me the same desire as you, and I intend to have you both—or rather all three, my angel; for it is now useless to conceal from you that Camille was also my prey.” — “And you could order me to sacrifice her... O monster!” — She weeps, she despairs; but, braving all those tears, I think of nothing now but my pleasure. These two charming girls satisfied all my lusts at once; both of them sated my passions without reserve; arse, cunt, mouth, tits, armpits, everything was fucked, everything was ravaged; and I discovered no fewer charms in these two than I had found in their sister; Véronique’s buttocks, in particular, surpassed everything I had ever seen of the most sublime in this sort; never was there a finer arse, never a finer breast! Unfortunately, all this occupied me for

only three days: scarcely had I sated myself with these two charming girls than I began to think only of destroying them. But the manner had to be cruel; the more pleasure they had given me, the more I wished to heap upon their bodies the sum of physical suffering, and the more I wanted the method itself to become abominable. What could I devise? I had done everything, tried everything, and had reached the point of defying the most celebrated executioners in the world to suggest a torture I had not already employed. After much reflection, this is what my villainous imagination at last supplied. I used the fifty thousand francs, stolen by Véronique from her unfortunate parents, to have constructed the machine I am about to describe to you.

The two sisters, completely naked, were encased in a sort of spring-loaded chainmail, which held each of them fast upon a small wooden stool studded with spikes; these, like those of which I shall speak, were activated only when necessary. They were eight feet apart; between them stood a table laden with the most succulent and delicate dishes: no other kind of food was offered to them. Now, to touch it, they had to stretch out their arms: in doing so, the first torment they experienced was the impossibility of reaching it. A far more violent torment was soon to be felt: by this movement of stretching the arm, the one who did so immediately set against herself and her neighbour more than four thousand steel points or blades, which, in an instant, tore, pierced, and bloodied both victims; so that these unfortunate women could think of no way to relieve the need that consumed them except by mutually murdering one another. They lived for a week in this odious torment, during which I spent eight hours a day watching them, either getting myself off or sodomising, also before their very eyes, the prettiest objects in my harem. I have never in my life tasted such intense pleasure: it is impossible to convey all the sensual sensations this spectacle aroused in me; I regularly came four or five times per session.

“By God, I believe it,” said Severino, interrupting the narration with cries as he spent himself in the rear of one of the prettiest girls at the supper; “yes, damn it, I believe it, for here we have the details of one of the most singular scenes one could possibly hear, and the pleasure our colleague Jérôme must have felt in carrying it out must have been devilishly intense—I judge it by what I feel in hearing him tell it. We must have a machine like that,” said Ambroise, being pleased by Justine, “and I assure you that if we ever possess it, she will most certainly be the first I place in it.” — “Go on, go on, Jérôme,” said Sylvestre, showing his member stiff as an iron bar, “for you would make us all spend upon one another if you were to stop us long upon so delightful an idea.”

I had occasion, Jérôme resumed, during the various journeys I made to Messina, to become acquainted with our amiable confrères, the Benedictines of the famous abbey of Saint-Nicolas-d’Assena; they were kind enough to show me their house and garden, to admit me to their table, and I distinguished among them, more particularly, Father Bonifacio of Bologna, one of the most charming libertines I had ever known; the conformity of my character with that of this monk soon bound us closely enough to confide a thousand things to one another. “Do you imagine, Jérôme,” he said to me one day, “that we deny ourselves here all the pleasures with which men of the world glut themselves? Oh, my friend, do not suppose it; you would have to belong to our order for me to reveal these secrets to you, and, rich as you are, nothing could be easier than for you to enter it.” — “But,” I said, “what of the status of landed lord that I have acquired by purchasing property on your island?” — “That would only be one more reason for your admission,” replied Bonifacio, “you will retain your property, be received with open arms, and initiated at once into all the mysteries of the order.” One can scarcely imagine how this idea inflamed me: the certainty of cloaking and increasing my vices beneath the imposing mask of religion; the hope, equally held out by Bonifacio, of soon finding



myself raised to the rank of a celestial mediator between man and his supposed God; and, sweeter still, that of abusing the infamous confessional to steal at my ease the money of old women and the virginity of the young—all this electrified me beyond measure, and eight days after his pressing invitation I had the honor of donning the monastic habit and immediately found myself associated in all the iniquitous schemes of those scoundrels; would you believe it, my friends? though the respect and submission of the people toward the clergy are very different in that country than in France, there was not a single family in Messina whose secrets and confidence those rogues did not possess, and you may imagine how they profited from both, while, as for their internal precautions, if yours are well taken, those of the Benedictines of Saint-Nicolas-d'Assena are at least as well arranged.

There, in vast underground chambers known only to the highest-ranking members of the order, there exists in abundance everything that Italy, Greece, and Sicily can produce that is most delectable, whether in young boys or girls; there, incest triumphs as it does here, and I have seen some who coupled with their fifth generation after having done so with the four preceding ones: the only difference between those cenobites and yourselves is that the former do not trouble to conceal their excesses within that vast tomb; they never descend into it; instead, miniature portraits of what their wealth has gathered there at great expense are placed in a secret cabinet in their apartments, and they have the desired object brought to them at once according to their lust; so that there is scarcely a moment in the day when you would not find them giving themselves over, in turn, either to the most exquisite flesh or to the divine objects that fill their seraglio in such profusion. As for their obscene caprices, you can easily imagine that they are as depraved as your own, and those individuals who have passed from that house into this one have sufficiently convinced you that wherever religion props up libertinism, its effects are always most intense.

The most extraordinary of all the passions I observed among these amiable bachelors was that of Dom Chrysostom, the superior of the house; he took pleasure only in a poisoned girl; he would sodomise her whilst she was writhing in agony, whilst two men took turns sodomising and whipping him; if the girl did not die during the act, he would stab her as soon as he had finished; if she was on the verge of death, he would wait for her final breaths to fill her arse with cum.

I completed my own corruption and became utterly jaded with those good fathers, to the point that nothing in the world could any longer arouse me.

My friend, I said to Bonifacio one day, after two years of this epicurean life, everything we do is delightful, but it is force that subjects to us the objects of our enjoyment, and I must confess that, in that respect, they arouse me less than those which artifice or cunning might offer to my desires. Clad in the garb you have had me don, I have nothing left to work with, according to my plans, but the holy and sacred tribunal of confession. I implore you to enable me to sit there soon, just as you have flattered me with the prospect. It is unheard of how much this idea excites me, incredible to what degree I intend to take advantage of everything this new position will offer me, to amuse both my greed and my lust. "Well then!" said Bonifacio, "nothing could be simpler," and handing me, eight days later, the key to the confessional in the Chapel of the Virgin, "Go," he said to me, "happy mortal, go, here is the voluptuous boudoir you have desired; make full use of it, plunder as many lovely objects from it as I devoured in the same place over eight years, and I shall not regret having secured it for you."

The excitement this new rank filled me with was such that I did not sleep a wink all night. The next day, at the crack of dawn, I was at my post, and as it was around Easter, my morning was not a bad one; I shall not bore you with all the nonsense I had to endure; I shall focus your attention only on a fourteen-year-old girl named Frosine, of noble birth and with such a delightful

face that she could only show herself veiled, to avoid the crowds that thronged around her whenever she appeared in public. Frosine opened up to me with all the candour and amiability of her age; her heart had not yet spoken, though no girl in Messina was surrounded by so many admirers; but her nature was beginning to make itself felt: very young and still very inexperienced, I managed so well with my questions that I taught her everything she did not know. "You are suffering, my dear child," I said to her with contrition, "I can see it; but it is your own fault. Modesty is not so exacting that one must sacrifice nature to it; your parents are misleading you regarding the practice of this severe virtue. The picture they paint for you is as cruel as it is unjust; created by nature, having received from her alone the sensations of pleasure she inspires in you, how, by yielding to them, could you possibly be insulting her? Everything depends on the choice one makes; if it is a good one, you will never have cause to regret it; I offer you both my advice and my care; but secrecy is required; I do not grant this favour to all my penitents; and the jealousy that this preference would inspire in them would inevitably ruin you; come tomorrow at noon sharp to seek me out in this chapel; I shall lead you into my chamber, and I assure you that peace, happiness and tranquillity shall soon be the fruit of my efforts; above all, rid yourself of that troublesome lady-in-waiting who follows your every step; be absolutely alone; say that I am expecting you for a pious conversation, and that they are to return for you at two o'clock." Frosine agreed to everything I proposed, and swore to carry it out; she kept her word; and here, for my part, are the measures I had taken, both to ensure I won this young lady's heart and to prevent her from ever returning to her family.

Immediately after this conversation I left Messina and came to my château, announcing at the convent that urgent affairs would prevent my return for a few days; Clementia took my place and was to answer when Frosine asked for me; continuing to seduce our young innocent, she was to lead her gradually into

consenting to come and meet me in the country. Once that was done, through the efforts of Bonifacio—whom I likewise assisted in his own intrigues so as to secure his help in mine—the rumour of Frosine’s abduction was to be spread throughout the city; a letter in an imitation of the young girl’s hand would be delivered to her parents, informing them that a very great lord from Florence, who had long been watching her, had forced her aboard a Genoese *felucca* that was rapidly departing; that this nobleman would make her fortune by marrying her, and that, since there was nothing in the plan to offend her honour, she accepted it, begging her parents not to oppose it; that they should, moreover, remain entirely at ease, and that she would write to them as soon as she arrived.

There is a god for lustful stratagems; nature favours them and protects them, and thus one rarely sees them fail; yet of all those devised for a long time, none, I dare say, had ever succeeded so completely. Frosine arrived at my estate the day after I had appointed to meet her in the designated chapel, and that very evening she was subjected to my libertinism. But what was my astonishment when I perceived that, despite the prettiest face imaginable, she possessed the slightest of charms: I had never seen a body so meagre, a complexion so dark, not the least hint of a bosom, and a sex as ill-formed as it was unappealing; seduced by her pleasing features, I nevertheless continued, though I treated her harshly—one does not like to be deceived. Frosine recognized her fault and wept bitterly over it when, compelled to leave in order to avert suspicion by my presence, she found herself thrown by Clémentia into a dark cell, both to hide her from any search and because, having enjoyed her far too much, I was not displeased, according to my habit, to make her somewhat miserable.

I found Bonifacio very pleased with the success of our ruses, but eager to enjoy the fruits of their success himself; though I told him the matter was hardly worth the trouble, he was so

captivated by Frosine's birth and appearance that he was determined to see for himself; and you can well imagine that I raised no objection. "It would," Bonifacio told me, "be an opportunity to pay a courtesy to Chrysostom, our superior; full of friendship and trust in him, I have told him of your good fortune; I am certain of the pleasure he would take in sharing it." — Gladly, I replied; Chrysostom's manners, wit, tastes and character suit me, and I shall eagerly seize every opportunity that brings me closer to him. We set off; my harem, ever bustling, provided me with ample means to satisfy the ravenous lust of my companions, and we committed atrocities.

You know of Chrysostom's passion; Bonifacio's, too, was marked by a peculiarity: he took pleasure in pulling out teeth; sometimes he would sodomise the victim whilst we were operating; at other times Bonifacio would pull them out, and we would sodomise her. Both of them amply satisfied their lust with Frosine, and when we had stripped her of the thirty-two beautiful teeth that nature had given her, the superior wanted to sacrifice her in his own way; you remember his passion. This unfortunate woman was made to swallow two large doses of corrosive sublimate in aqua fortis; and her pains and convulsions were so violent that it became impossible to restrain her in order to enjoy her. Chrisostome, however, overcame this, and his pleasures were marked by the most extraordinary intoxication and the most inconceivable delirium: we wished to imitate him, and we soon found that there was nothing in lust as thrilling as this manner of enjoyment in which Chrisostome took such delight. This is easy enough to conceive, no doubt; everything in a woman then contracts; her sensations, moreover, are in such a state of violent irritation that it is impossible not to be electrified oneself. 'O Justine!' said Clément, interrupting his colleague here, 'you see, Chrysostom reasoned just as I do; "One never better excites one's senses than when one has produced in the

object that serves us the greatest possible impression, by whatever means.”<sup>2</sup> And who doubts this truth,’ said Severino, ‘was it worth interrupting Jerome to remind him of it? What is certain, continued the narrator, is that no one in the world was as convinced of this as Chrysostom, and no one put it into practice as often or as delightfully as he did. Frosine breathed her last in one of these agonies, with Bonifacio up her arse, Chrysostom in her cunt, and me under her armpits. She was not the only victim we sacrificed in this manner. We reached the point of sacrificing six at a time in this way; three were writhing before our eyes... whilst we each fucked one in the cunt, the arse and the mouth. After the girls, we tried the boys, and our lusts redoubled.

Our orgies were interspersed with philosophical discussions: scarcely had we committed some horror than we sought to legitimize it; no one succeeded in doing so as well as Chrysostome.

“It is quite astonishing,” he said to us one day, “that men should be foolish enough to attach any value to morality; I confess I have never understood what necessity it could have for them. Corruption is dangerous only because it is not universal. One does not like the neighborhood of a man with a malignant fever, because one fears contagion; but if one is afflicted by it oneself, one fears nothing more. There could be no inconvenience among the members of a society entirely vicious: let all acquire the same degree of corruption, and all will associate without danger. Virtue alone would then become dangerous; no longer being the habitual state of man, it would be harmful to adopt it. It is only the transition from one state to another that produces inconvenience; if all resemble one another, if all remain in the same condition, there can be no danger. It is entirely the same to be good or wicked when everyone is one or the other; but if the tone of society is virtuous, it becomes dangerous to be wicked, just as it would be dangerous to be good if all men were

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<sup>2</sup> See page 219 of the second volume.

depraved. If, then, the state in which one exists is in itself null or indifferent, why fear adopting one rather than the other? And why be surprised or afflicted, as I suppose one might be, at choosing to be wicked, when everything leads us to it, and when it is fundamentally equal? What being could prove to me that it is better to make others happy than to torment them? Setting aside for a moment the pleasure I may take in acting one way or the other, is it essentially useful that others be happy? And if it is not, why should I restrain myself from overwhelming them with misfortune? It seems to me that everything comes down to what I myself experience from either action; for, being by nature charged especially with my own happiness, and not at all with that of others, I would only be wrong with respect to nature if I neglected to delight myself according to her designs. The same being whom my tastes or violences render unhappy, because he is weaker than I, will enjoy his strength with another, and all will become equal. The cat destroys the mouse and is itself devoured by other animals; it is solely for this relative and general destruction that nature has created us. Let us take care never to resist the kind of corruption or immorality to which our inclinations lead us; there is not the least harm in yielding to it. From the principles I establish, it follows that the happiest state will always be that in which the depravity of morals is most universal, because happiness is clearly found in evil, and he who abandons himself to it most ardently will necessarily be the happiest. Men have been greatly mistaken in saying that there is a sort of natural justice always engraved in the human heart, and that its result is the absurd precept of not doing to others what we would not wish done to ourselves. This ridiculous law, born of weakness, could never take root in the heart of a man of energy; and if I had moral principles to establish, it would not be in the soul of a weak being that I would seek them. He who fears to receive harm will always say that none must be done; while he who mocks gods, men, and laws will never cease committing it. What matters is to know which of the two acts rightly or wrongly; and

it seems to me such a question cannot be seriously posed. I defy the virtuous man to tell me in good faith that, in performing a good action, he has felt even a quarter of the pleasure experienced by the man who has just committed a bad one. Why then, free to choose, should I prefer a mode that scarcely stirs me to one from which arises the most tumultuous and delightful agitation a man can feel? Let us broaden our ideas, judge society as a whole, and we shall easily be convinced that the happiest of all will necessarily be that which is the most corrupt, and this in every respect. I am far from limiting myself to a few partial depravities; I do not want one merely to be libertine, drunkard, thief, impious, etc.—I demand that one try everything, abandon oneself to everything, and always preferably to those excesses that appear most monstrous, for it is only by extending the sphere of one's disorders that one can reach more quickly the degree of felicity promised by disorder. The false ideas we have of the creatures around us are still the source of countless errors in moral judgment; we invent chimerical duties toward them because they imagine they have duties toward us. Let us have the strength to renounce what we expect from others, and our duties toward them will vanish at once. What, I ask you, are all the creatures on earth compared to a single one of our desires? And for what reason should I deprive myself of even the slightest of those desires to please a creature who is nothing to me and who does not concern me at all? If I fear something from it, then certainly I must spare it—not for its sake, but for mine, since in general it should only be for myself that I act in the world; but if I have nothing to fear, I must surely draw from it all I can to enhance my pleasures, and consider all others only as beings created purely to serve them.<sup>3</sup> Morality, I repeat, is therefore useless to happiness; more than that, it harms it; and it is only in the

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<sup>3</sup> These are here only the outlines of principles that will be far more fully developed in the course of this work.



midst of the most extensive and general corruption that individuals, as well as societies, will find the greatest possible degree of felicity on earth."

Putting these doctrines into practice, I soon abandoned myself, along with my friends, to everything that debauchery and depravity, to everything that despotism and cruelty, can offer that is most piquant and refined.

Such was the state of our minds when there was brought before my tribunal a young boy of sixteen, as handsome as Cupid, accused of having attempted to poison his mother. Nothing was more certain; all the evidence stood against him, and he was inevitably lost, when my friends and I, consulting together on the means of saving a young man whom all three of us burned to enjoy, my perfidious imagination suggested a plan which not only saved the guilty but caused the innocent to perish. "Where is the poison," I said to the accused, "with which you are charged?" — "It is in my mother's hands." — "Very well; in the final examination you are about to undergo, affirm that it was she who wished to take your life: you want her to die; she shall die—are you satisfied?" — "Delighted, my lord, delighted! I detest that woman, and would sooner die than not destroy her." — "Offer as proof the poison she holds." — "Yes; but it is known that I procured it from the apothecary of this town; the difficulty he made, and how I overcame it by telling him I bought it on my mother's orders to rid the house of rats." — "Is that all against you?" — "No." — "Then I answer at once both for your life and for your mother's death." I sent for the apothecary. "Take care," I said to him, "not to accuse this child; it was indeed by his mother's order that he bought from you, the other day, the arsenic which is the subject of this trial, and it is indeed in her hands that the poison now is; she wished to make away with him—we are certain of it; a contrary deposition would ruin you." — "But," said the druggist, "would I not be in the wrong in any case?" — "No; nothing is more natural than to have fulfilled the wishes of a mother, mistress of a household; you could not foresee her

intentions; but you would have ruined yourself had you obeyed only the child." Convinced by these arguments, the man spoke as I instructed him; the young fellow maintained what I had suggested; and his unfortunate mother, crushed by these calumnies and finding nothing to answer them, perished on the scaffold, while my friends and I, in sight of her execution, abandoned ourselves with her son to the most depraved excesses. I shall never forget that, even as Bonifacio possessed me, I in turn was engaged with the boy at the very moment his mother expired. The readiness with which this charming youth lent himself to our pleasures, the joy that appeared upon his face at the sight of the preparations for the death of her who had given him life, gave us such high notions of his disposition that we subscribed to provide for him and sent him to Naples, where age, ripening and perfecting his principles, will no doubt have made him one of the boldest villains in Europe.

Folly would cry out: "What a crime! You have given society a monster whose perfected crimes may claim thousands of victims." To this, we answer: "What an excellent action! We have served nature by sharpening one of the springs through which she effects the necessary evil for which she is always hungry;"—thus replying to a mind still steeped in the Gothic prejudices of morality and virtue.

We spent three more months at my estate, drowned in luxury and debauchery, when reasons of prudence at last compelled us to reappear where our duty placed us; the first adventure that my position as confessor brought me, upon returning, was that of a devout woman of thirty, still fairly pretty; she was on her deathbed when she sent for me. "My father," she said to me, "it is time I repair the most odious of injustices. Look at the million in gold deposited on this table, and observe this young girl," she continued, pointing to a child of twelve with a rather pleasing face; "none of this belongs to me, and I had the bad faith to keep it... alas! who knows, I might perhaps have done worse. One of my friends, dying in Naples two years ago, entrusted me with

both this girl and this money, making me swear to deliver the one and the other to the Duke of Spinosa in Milan; seduced by the gold, I kept everything; but the veil is torn at the moment I am about to die, and the cry of my conscience so troubles me that I cannot refrain from confessing my faults and prescribing their promptest reparation. However much confidence I may have in you, my father, I believe myself obliged to leave a written statement for my heirs, which will inform them of this matter.” — “That precaution,” I immediately interrupted, “by unnecessarily divulging your wrongs, would at the same time prove your distrust of me, and from that moment I must no longer take any part in this affair.” — “Oh, sir, sir, let us say no more of that writing, since it offends you; you alone shall fulfill my duty; you alone shall quiet the cry of my conscience, without anyone being informed.” — “What you were doing, madam,” I then replied more calmly, “was dreadful, no doubt; and I do not know whether the simple restitution you propose will suffice to appease heaven.” Then resuming with severity: “To what a point you permitted yourself to betray at once friendship, religion, honor, and nature! Oh no, do not imagine it: such a simple restitution will never suffice. You are rich, madam; you know the needs of the poor; you must necessarily add to the sum restored that of half your fortune, in order to reconcile yourself with celestial justice... You know it, madam, your faults are very great, and it is the poor who are our best advocates with God; do not bargain with your conscience; once you have become the prey of the demons who await you, you will no longer be able to implore the Supreme Being, nor obtain for your crimes the mercy of which they have such great need.” — “You frighten me, my father!” — “I must do so, madam; in my capacity as mediator between heaven and you, I must show you the scourges suspended above your head; and when do I warn you? At the moment when you may still avert them: you are lost if you hesitate.” Overwhelmed by the tone in which I pronounced these last words, my devout penitent had a coffer brought at once, the

riches of which, amounting to eight hundred thousand livres, more than equalled the value I demanded in asking for half her fortune. "Take it," she said to me, shedding floods of tears; "take it, my father; my debt is paid; pray for my poor soul, and reassure me, I beg you." — "I would wish to do so, madam," I replied, as I had the gold and the little girl removed by Clémentia, dressed as a duenna and whom I had brought as my sister; "yes, I would desire with all my heart to dissipate your fears entirely; but can I do so without deceiving you? You must, I feel, rely upon the mercy of God; but can your reparation equal the offense? Will that reparation, which concerns only the wrong you have done to men, appease an offended God? When one reflects upon the greatness, the immensity of that Supreme Being, can one flatter oneself with softening him once one has had the misfortune to offend him? Learn the character of this terrible God in the history of his people; see him everywhere jealous, vindictive, implacable; and these different modes, which would be vices in man, become virtues in him. And indeed, perpetually outraged by his creatures, incessantly envied by the demon, how could he, without astonishing severity, succeed in manifesting his power? The distinctive mark of authority is necessarily rigor; tolerance is the virtue of the weak. Despotism has always indicated power: they may assure me that God is good; I say that he is just; and true justice has never agreed with goodness, which, taken in its proper sense, is only one of the effects of weakness and stupidity. You have cruelly outraged your Creator, madam; your reparation falls short of your faults; and I cannot conceal from you that it is not in my power to shield you from the just punishments you deserve; I can only implore the Eternal for the repose of your soul. I shall do so without doubt; but, weak and wretched creature as you are, can I flatter myself with succeeding? The punishments you have to fear are dreadful: to burn eternally in the fires of hell is, I feel it, a horrible penalty, which the imagination can scarcely conceive without trembling; such, nevertheless, is your fate, and I see no means of preserving you from it." Here, I

confess, the disorder of my senses, proportioned to that which I was causing in my bigot, rose beyond all expression; I was so aroused that I could scarcely contain myself; there was even a moment when I could not refrain from indulging myself. — “Oh, my father,” said the gentle creature then, without perceiving my movements, “will you at least grant me absolution?” — “God forbid!” I replied in a firm and severe tone; “I will not so far compromise the mediation entrusted to me by heaven; I will not, by that holy blessing, place the guilty on a level with the righteous; to demand it—even to dare ask it of me—is a new crime, for which heaven must inevitably punish you. Farewell, madam; your strength fails, I see it; summon all that remains to sustain the cruel moment of your appearance before God—a moment most terrible, no doubt, when one arrives there only to hear the sentence that must plunge you into hell.”

Here the unfortunate woman fainted; and I, drunk with lust, crime and wickedness, thrust my raging cock forward and plunged it into the arse of my devotee, who, though dying of a wasting disease, had managed to retain enough charms to still inspire desire. I must admit, it had been a long time since I had had such a satisfying release. My deed done, I vanished, taking with me all the jewellery I could find in the room; and I learnt, that very evening, that my poor penitent had breathed her timid last amidst the floods of semen with which I had inundated her passage. I gave the little girl to the convent, and kept for myself only the riches, which I was beginning to prefer above all else.

However, at the height of the happiness and tranquil ease my philosophy allowed me to enjoy, I experienced that sort of inconstancy—the scourge of the soul and too fatal a attribute of our unhappy humanity; jaded with everything, no pleasure could any longer rouse me. I devised horrors and carried them out in cold blood; in a state where I denied myself nothing, however costly my schemes of debauchery might be, I undertook them at once. I had victims of my lust sought out as far away as the islands of the Archipelago, and when my agents one

day found themselves in competition with those of the Grand Signior, I had the glory and satisfaction of learning that they had prevailed over the Sultan's.

But none of that was enough for me any longer; a simple pleasure no longer produced the slightest sensation in me—I needed crimes, and I could not find any that were extreme enough.

One day, as I contemplated Mount Etna, whose depths were vomiting flames, I found myself wishing to be that famous volcano: “Mouth of hell,” I cried, gazing upon it, “if like you I could swallow up all the cities around me, how many tears I would make flow!” Scarcely had I uttered this invocation when I heard a noise nearby: a man had been listening to me. “You have just formed a strange desire,” he said. “In the state I am in,” I replied irritably, “one forms stranger ones still.” “Be that as it may,” he answered, “let us confine ourselves to the one you have just expressed—and learn from me that it is possible.” He told me he was a chemist, that he had spent his life studying nature and stealing her secrets, and that, immorality guiding his studies, for twenty years he had devoted his discoveries solely to the misfortune of mankind; my singular wish, he added, convinced him he could trust me. “Know, then, that one can imitate the terrible eruptions of this mountain; if you wish, we shall attempt it together.” — “Sir,” I said, inviting him to sit beside me under a tree, “let us speak, I beg you—is it truly possible to imitate a volcano?” — “Nothing easier.” — “And by the action of this artificial volcano we could produce the same effects as an earthquake?” — “Absolutely.” — “We would destroy cities?” — “We would swallow them up; we would overturn the entire island.” — “Let us act, sir, let us act; I will cover you with gold if you succeed.” — “I ask nothing,” he replied; “evil amuses me, and when I indulge in it, I never accept payment; I sell only the formulas that are useful to men, and give away freely all those that harm them.” I could not tire of observing this man. “How happy one is, sir,” I said with enthusiasm, “when one encounters

people who think as we do! Tell me, heavenly man, what motive leads you to do evil, and what do you feel in doing it?"

"Listen to me," said Almani—that was the name of this chemist—"I will answer your two questions. The motive that leads me to devote myself to evil was born from the deep study I have made of nature; the more I have sought to uncover her secrets, the more I have seen her occupied solely with harming mankind; follow her in all her operations and you will find her ever voracious, destructive, and wicked, ever inconsistent, contrary, and devastating; cast your eyes for a moment upon the immensity of evils her infernal hand spreads over us in this world. What purpose was there in creating us only to make us so unhappy? Why does our miserable being, like all those she produces, emerge from her workshop so full of imperfections? Would one not say that her murderous art wished only to form victims—that evil is her sole element, and that it is only to cover the earth with blood, tears, and mourning that she is endowed with the power of creation, only to deploy her scourges that she exerts her energy? One of your modern philosophers called himself the lover of nature; well then, my friend, I declare myself her executioner. Study her, follow that atrocious nature, and you will see her create only to destroy, achieve her ends only through slaughter, and fatten herself, like the Minotaur, on the misfortune and ruin of men. What esteem, what love could you have for such a force, whose effects are always directed against you? Do you ever see her grant a benefit without some grave suffering accompanying it? If she gives you twelve hours of light, it is to plunge you into twelve more of darkness; if she lets you enjoy the sweetness of summer, it is only by mingling it with the horrors of thunder; beside the most salutary herb, her treacherous hand causes poisons to grow; she bristles the fairest land with volcanoes that reduce it to ashes; if she adorns herself for a moment before your eyes, it is only to cover herself with frost the rest of the year; if she grants you some vigour in youth, it is to overwhelm you in old age with torments and pains; if she allows

you for a moment to enjoy the strange spectacle of this world, it is so that, in traversing its fatal course, you may at every step be struck with terror at the dreadful misfortunes that cover it. See with what malicious art she mingles your days with a little pleasure and much suffering; examine, if you can, the diseases with which she afflicts you, the divisions she sows among you, the terrible consequences with which she surrounds even your sweetest passions: beside love stands fury, beside courage ferocity, beside ambition murder, beside sensibility tears, beside wisdom all the maladies of restraint; in a word, into what frightful condition does she cast you, since the disgust for life becomes such in your soul that not a single man would wish to live again if offered the choice at the moment of death? Yes, my friend, yes, I abhor nature, and it is because I know her well that I detest her; instructed by these dreadful secrets, I turned inward and felt—this is my answer to your second question—I felt an indescribable pleasure in copying her crimes: ‘Well then,’ I said to myself, ‘is there a being more contemptible, more odious, than one who gave me life only to make me find pleasure in all that harms my fellow creatures?’ What!—I was but sixteen—hardly had I left the cradle of this monster when she drove me to the same horrors that delight her! This is no longer corruption: scarcely am I born—it is inclination, it is instinct; her barbarous hand knows only how to fashion evil; evil amuses her; and I would love such a mother? No—I will imitate her, but while hating her; I will copy her—she wills it—but only while cursing her; and, furious to see that my passions serve her, I will so unravel her secrets that, if possible, I may become even more wicked in order to oppose her all my life. Her murderous snares are spread only for us; let us try to entangle her in them in turn, to thwart her works and insult her more deeply, to disturb her, if possible, so as to outrage her more surely. But the harlot mocked me; her resources prevailed over mine; we struggled too unequally; offering me only her effects, she concealed all her causes; I therefore confined myself to imitating the former; unable to divine the



motive that placed the dagger in her hands, I at least knew how to seize the weapon from her—and have used it just as she does.”

“Oh, my friend,” I exclaimed in my enthusiasm, “I have never seen a more ardent imagination than yours... what energy, what vigour—and how much harm you must have done in the world with so lively a mind!” — “I exist only through evil and for evil,” replied Almani; “evil alone moves me; I breathe only in committing it; my whole organization delights in it alone.” — “Almani,” I interrupted warmly, “you must, no doubt, be aroused in giving yourself over to it?” — “Judge for yourself,” said the chemist, placing in my hand a member as thick as an arm, its swollen violet veins seeming ready to burst with the force of the blood coursing through them. “And your tastes, my dear sir—what are they?” — “I take pleasure in watching a creature perish in one of my experiments; at that moment I couple with an animal, and I climax as the creature dies.” — “And with men—you never do so?” — “Never; I am devoted to such practices and to killing—that is where I remain.”

Almani had scarcely finished answering me when a stream of lava opened at our feet; I sprang up in fright, while he, without the least disturbance, still handling himself, asked me coolly where I was going. “Do not move,” he said; “you wish to know my passions—come and see one; come,” he continued, arousing himself, “come see the torrents I release mingle with those of bitumen and sulfur with which delightful nature surrounds our steps here; it seems to me that I am in hell, that I release myself into its flames; that idea amuses me—I came here only to satisfy it.” He swore, he blasphemed, he raged, and what he emitted seemed to fly out and vanish amid the lava.

“Almani,” I said to him, “follow me; I am eager to get to know you better; I have victims to offer you; moreover, I wish to learn your secrets.” We returned to my home; the chemist admired my dwelling, praised my taste, and was amused by my harem; I gave him some goats, and I watched him fuck them with pleasure, whilst with a wire he drew lightning onto the

head of a pretty sixteen-year-old Neapolitan girl, who died in the process; he struck another with electricity, who breathed her last in terrible agony; he piled so much air pressure onto the lungs of a third that she was suffocated in half a second; he examined the victim of his operations completely naked, fondled and kissed her buttocks for a very long time, licked her arsehole, and found, he said, in this single episode, the full dose of irritation necessary to condemn the subject to death. His experiments also extended to young boys, whom he treated in the same way; he then taught me several of his secrets, and we proceeded to the great experiment that had been the purpose of the journey. The process was simple; it merely involved forming loaves weighing ten to twelve pounds, kneaded with water, iron filings and sulphur; these loaves were placed three or four feet underground, over a distance of several leagues, about twenty inches apart; as soon as these masses were heated, the eruption occurred of its own accord; we multiplied these deposits so greatly that the entire island experienced one of the most furious upheavals that had yet shaken it for several centuries; ten thousand houses were overturned in Messina, five public buildings crushed, and twenty-five thousand souls fell prey to our notorious wickedness. "My dear friend," I said to the chemist as soon as our operation was finished, "when we have done so much harm together, the safest course is to part ways: take these fifty thousand francs, and let us never speak of one another again..." — "Silence, yes, I promise," replied Almani; "The money, I refuse: do you not remember that I told you I never accept payment for the evil I do? Had I done you good, I would accept a reward, but I have done you nothing but harm... harm that gave me pleasure; we are even. Farewell."

My disgust for Sicily redoubled after I had brought about that terrible event, and, feeling that nothing in the world could any longer detain me there, I put my property up for sale after slaughtering all those in my seraglio—even Clémentia herself, despite her deep attachment to me; struck by my cruelty and

ingratitude, and astonished to see that I reserved for her, with particular care, a more dreadful fate than for the others, she dared to reproach me. "O Clémentia," I said to her, "how little you understand the heart of a libertine such as I, if you did not suspect the fate I prepared for you! Do you not know that the gratitude with which you believe you overwhelm my soul becomes, in its exhausted springs, only another means of directing it toward crime; and that if, in sacrificing you, I feel any sorrow or remorse, it is only that I cannot do enough?" She died before my eyes, and I gave myself over violently to the sensation.

I embarked for Africa with the intention of joining the barbarians of those dreadful regions, so as, if I could, to become a thousand times more ferocious than they.

But it was here that the inconstancy of fate chose to convince me, by making me experience its revers, that although its hand almost always favours crime, those who have been executioners must in turn become victims when new persecutors arise... a truth which, however, proves nothing in favour of virtue, since in the accounts I have given you it is seen almost constantly tormented, but which should only teach us that man, the plaything of fortune through his weakness, ought, if he is reasonable, to oppose its caprices with nothing but patience and courage.

I had embarked at Palermo on a small, light vessel that I had chartered for myself alone; scarcely had we reached the level of the rocks of Quelles when we caught sight of the coasts of Africa. Having arrived there, a Barbary corsair attacked us and took us without the slightest resistance; in an instant, my friends, I found myself deprived of both my fortune and my liberty—I lost in a single moment all that men hold most dear. "Alas!" I said to myself as soon as I was in chains, "if this ill-gotten wealth were to fall into better hands, I might perhaps believe in the justice of fortune; but would it be any better off in the hands of these villains, who ply these waters only to furnish the bey of Tunis's seraglio? Will it be better there," I said, "than with me, who also formed seraglios? Where, then, is that sublime justice

of fate? Patience—this is but one of its caprices: this one ruins me today, another will raise me up again.”

Within a few hours we arrived at Tunis; my master presented me to the bey, who ordered his *bostangi* to put me to work at once in the gardens, and my riches were confiscated. I attempted a few protests, but was told that I was a priest of a religion abhorrent to Muhammad and that such goods were never restored; I had no choice but to be silent and work. Being scarcely thirty-two, I was still in the age of strength, and though enervated by my excesses, I felt I still possessed all the energy needed to endure my condition patiently; poorly fed, poorly lodged, and made to labour hard, if my body suffered some decline, my mind, I dare affirm, felt none of it, and I retained the same spirit of lust and wickedness.<sup>4</sup> Sometimes, as I looked at the walls of the seraglio at whose feet I laboured, I would say to myself: “O Jérôme! you too once had a seraglio, and delightful victims who filled it—and now, through your own fault, you are reduced to serving those whom you once rivaled.”

One evening, as I was giving myself over to these melancholy reflections, I saw a note fall at my feet; I hastened to pick it up—God! what was my astonishment when I recognized in it the handwriting and the name of Joséphine... that unfortunate girl whom I had sold in Berlin, with the certainty that she had been bought only to become the victim of a debauched murder.

“It is delightful to return good for evil,” Joséphine wrote to me in that note; “you believed me destined to be the victim of a scoundrel’s frenzy, and you delivered me up so that I might become so; my star preserved me from the dreadful fate you intended for me, and if I count myself fortunate, it is above all in the moment when it allows me to break your chains. Tomorrow at the same hour you shall receive, as a pledge of my enduring

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<sup>4</sup> These vices grow stronger with age, yet never grow old. One has less energy to put them into practice, often fewer means; but their indestructible seed remains unchanged—it even increases rather than diminishes.

feelings, a purse of three hundred Venetian sequins and the portrait of the one you once loved... a letter will be enclosed, which will explain the means of saving us both. Farewell, monster... whom I still love in spite of myself; if you do not return my feelings, at least respect the one... who avenges herself on you only through acts of kindness."

JOSÉPHINE.

Inconceivable effects of the most dreadful of characters! My first impulse was to be dismayed that a victim I had sent to her fate had escaped it; my second was to feel stung at owing a service to one whom I had never wished to do anything but dominate; no matter, I said to myself, let us accept—the essential thing is to get out of here; she will learn, once I have made use of her, what gratitude amounts to in a heart like mine. The second note, the money, the portrait—everything arrived at the appointed hour; I kissed the gold, spat upon the portrait, and read the letter eagerly: I was told that she had become mistress of a considerable fortune, which I would be free to share if I wished—and above all if I deserved it; that I should at once go and speak, at the place indicated, with the master of a ship who was awaiting me, and come to terms with him both on the price he would demand to take us to Marseille and on the means to be taken for our escape together.

I hurried to the man I had been told of and received every satisfaction from him; Delmas was an old renegade, now repentant, who burned to see his homeland again and to wrest as many victims as he could from the Turks. "Here," he said to me, "is first a silk ladder that you will pass to your protectress; add to it this liquid, with which she can cut through her bars simply by rubbing them; once in the gardens—where, as you may well suppose, she must arrive only at night—she will make her way to me by the same route you have just taken; I shall hide her aboard my vessel, where you must come and join us as soon as the prison is opened."

Overjoyed by this good news, I returned to the foot of the seraglio; I gave the agreed signal, and it was answered; a string was lowered to me, to which I attached the ladder, the liquid, and a note in reply in which I expressed sentiments of tenderness and gratitude as best I could; the lattice closed again, and the next day a final message informed me that the plan would be carried out the following night; I was urged not to forget, so as to be sure of finding Joséphine—her heart and her treasures—the next morning, early, in the hold of Delmas's vessel.

I was punctual; I shall not dwell on the scene of our reunion—it was tender on Joséphine's side, even bathed in her tears. On mine, it was severe, always accompanied by that inner feeling of malice which never allowed anyone to fall into my power without my at once experiencing the keenest desire to exercise my dominion over them. Joséphine had reached that age at which features, as they develop, transform their delicacy into beauty; she was truly a very beautiful woman. While waiting for the captain to set sail, we drank a bottle of Syracusan wine, and the dear girl recounted her adventures.

The man who bought her from me was Frederick, King of Prussia, who, upon hearing his brother's account, had ardently desired the sacrifice of this creature. Fortunate enough to escape the dreadful fate that awaited her, thanks to the intervention of the valet who had impregnated her, she had fled Berlin that very night and, like me, had ended up in Venice; various romantic adventures had sustained her in that city, until a Tunisian pirate had abducted her and sold her to the Bey, of whom she had become the favourite. What she brought me, though very considerable, was nevertheless no more than a third of the riches with which that sovereign had showered her; but she had been able to take only that: there was about five hundred thousand francs. "Come now, my dear," I said to Joséphine, "this is enough to set us up in Marseille; we are both young enough to hope to make this money grow, and to hope to be rich one day. My hand," I continued falsely, "will become, as soon as we arrive, the

reward for your care, if it is true that you can truly forgive me for the terrible crime of which I am guilty toward you." A thousand tender kisses from Joséphine were her reply; we were hidden from all eyes, calm still reigned in the ship, the sweetness of freedom; the fumes of Bacchus—all inflamed us to the point that the sacks upon which we lay served as a throne for voluptuousness; it had been a long time since I had released myself; I found myself with a woman upon whom my treacherous imagination was already hatching dreadful schemes of wickedness; Joséphine was taken from behind; the beauty of her buttocks tempted me—they were surprisingly well-preserved—and I sodomized her; "Revive me," I said to her as soon as I was finished, "and describe to my lust the scenes of the Bey's; how does he conduct himself with a woman?" — "His tastes are peculiar," Joséphine replied; "before approaching him, a woman must lie completely naked, prostrate on her stomach, for three full hours on a carpet, while two eunuchs<sup>5</sup> masturbate him during that time; when their master is aroused, they go to lift the woman up and lead her to him; she bows; then the eunuchs tie her feet and hands; from that moment on, she must spin with prodigious speed until she falls; as soon as she is down, he throws himself on her and sodomizes her; this is the only way he takes pleasure in women, and his love for them depends on the greater or lesser speed with which they spin. I had pleased him only through my talent in this regard, and all the gifts I have received are merely the reward for it. Aroused by this account, I sodomized Joséphine a second time, and I confess I felt a kind of pleasure in finding myself in the same body that had satisfied a Turkish emperor, when Delmas, suddenly entering, thought to catch us in the act; he had come to inform us that he was about to set sail, and that, free in an hour or two, we could go and meet him in the captain's cabin.; we went there. Since Joséphine had confided to the renegade her plan to set up a trading firm with me in Marseille, I quickly deduced from the captain's replies that he had enough

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<sup>5</sup> Names of the Ganymedes of the harems of Asia.

money to join us fully; from that moment on, I conceived the plan to rob, even to slaughter, my two benefactors; and, seizing their riches and their ship, to sail for Livorno instead of Marseille, in order to evade pursuit. With this in mind, I stirred up Delmas's passion for Joséphine, and at the same time urged her not to be too resistant to the renegade's advances toward her, so as to draw from him a wealth of information and assistance in carrying out a plan that I could not execute alone, given my lack of skill in such matters.

These first attempts met with all the success I could have expected, and by the second night Delmas was sleeping with Joséphine; that was all I desired. Hardly had I seen them together than I forced the sentry, dagger in hand, gathering around me as many of the crew as I could; "My friends," I said to them, "see to what extent this scoundrel betrays me; I entrust him with my wife, and this is how he uses her." And, falling upon the sleeping pair, I sought to pierce them with a thousand blows. But Delmas, awake, seemed to expect everything; he fired at me and missed. I rushed at him, stabbed him with the unworthy companion of his bed, and left them bathed in their blood. Then, returning to the deck, I gathered the crew around me and addressed them:

"My comrades," I said to them, "the horror most of you have witnessed alone compelled me to do what I have just done; I have punished a scoundrel unfit to command you, since he carried depravity and shamelessness to such a point. Delmas shared with me the costs of this voyage, and although you have seen me in the guise of a slave, I possess a fortune no less than his; I therefore succeed him by right. Rely on my integrity and my abilities; I will lead you better than he did. The voyage will be much the same; I change only the destination. Pilot, set our course for Livorno; my commercial connections lead me to prefer that port to Marseille; and as for you, my friends, from today I double your pay."

This speech earned me universal applause; the dead were thrown into the sea; I seized all their riches, and we set sail.



“O Fortune!” I cried out as soon as I was at ease, “you are at last repairing your wrongs toward me. No doubt this will be the last of your upheavals, and you will end by convincing me—as well as all who learn my story—that if you sometimes cast us from reef to reef, it is only to make us better feel all the delights with which your hand crowns us in port.”

When I reckoned it all up, my prize—without even counting the ship, which I sold upon arriving in Livorno—could amount to twelve hundred thousand livres; and I was delightfully immersed in those pleasures that hope allows the mind to savour so keenly, when the watch sentry signalled that a corsair was bearing down upon us. Recognizing the superiority of my forces, I ordered us to board; I leapt onto the deck, my crew following me. Death flew beneath our blows; we were already bathing in blood; I burst, sabre in hand, into the captain’s cabin. Heavens! what a sight struck my eyes!... Good God! what was my astonishment!... It was Joséphine—Joséphine, whom I believed I had stabbed aboard Delmas’s ship. With a dreadful stroke I cut down the man who sought to defend her; then, turning to her: “By what fatality,” I cried, “does your detestable person continually present itself before my eyes!” — “Strike it down, that being who so offends you,” said Joséphine, opening her breast; “yes, make haste to annihilate it this time; I am guilty; I was pursuing you with the intention of taking your life; you triumph, perfidious man, make yourself master of mine; and know first, if you wish, by what fatality you see me again, when you were already rejoicing at my death.

“I knew you, Jérôme; your ruses did not deceive me—I exposed them all to Delmas. Suspecting that you had won over a dangerous faction among the sailors, we preferred cunning to force: the renegade had me escape that evening in the ship’s longboat, escorted only by two oarsmen; and, to better uncover your plans, he spent the night with one of the ship’s maids, whom you took for me, and whom you no doubt slaughtered with him, since it is you who commands here. As for me, I was

to make my way quickly to a small vessel we knew to be not far off, similar to Delmas's, and commanded, like his, by a renegade... there he is—you have just laid him at your feet. This captain, forewarned by the letter I carried him, was to feign an attack on Delmas, defeat him, and put you in irons. Was it not time for me to avenge myself on your perfidious plots? You prevail, Jérôme; there lies my defender lifeless; I repeat it—make haste to take mine. If heaven were to grant me the advantage, be sure you would not escape me; you are an ingrate, since you have been able to silence within yourself the sacred voice of gratitude, and I will no longer be the friend of a monster.”

Here, fury joined in my soul with all the feelings of disgust and rage that had already led me to proscribe that infernal creature; I had her immediately put in irons and thrown into the hold of my ship; then, having her vessel taken in tow by mine, we continued sailing toward Livorno. But that evening, somewhat recovered from my exertions and having drunk a few bottles of Greek wine, my infernal vice soon reminded me that I had a victim to offer it. I had supped with a young cabin boy I was very fond of, who excited my thoughts; at once the most dreadful plan of vengeance inflamed my imagination. I had the victim brought up to my cabin and delivered her in detail to all the sailors of the crew; I aroused them and forced them upon her in turn; as soon as each had finished, I compelled him to administer a hundred lashes across her back and buttocks and to further humiliate her. Sixty-four men thus passed over her body, and she received six thousand four hundred strokes. I alone had not spent myself; I pleased myself while contemplating Joséphine lying unconscious on the floor of my cabin, taking a grim satisfaction in seeing there the one who had risked everything for me, and who, if she sought revenge, had, it must be admitted, obtained powerful grounds for it. Never had such fury seized my senses; my desire escaped me in spite of myself. I wished for a horrible death for this creature; twenty schemes

presented themselves to my mind, only to be rejected as too lenient; I wanted to gather upon her person all the sufferings of humanity, and none seemed strong enough when I considered them. “O Jérôme!” she cried upon regaining consciousness and divining my thoughts, “I could still live—and live to love you; you know what I have done for you; which of us was first in the wrong?” But far from softening me, the wretch only inflamed me further; I trampled her underfoot, struck her, bit her; I was like a tiger, master at last of its prey, whose fury only grows as it plays with it; in short, I was drunk with lust and frenzy, when my men came to inform me that the vessel we were towing was greatly hindering our manœuvring. It was then that I finally resolved upon the singular plan you are about to see.

I had Joséphine bound, naked, to the mast of that vessel; I loaded it with powder, had the cables that fastened it to mine cut, then, lighting a fuse—the only link that remained between that ship and ours—I blew it up into the air, and, even as I pleased myself with my young cabin boy, I took the dreadful satisfaction of seeing the torn limbs of the woman who had once loved me so dearly, and who had only just restored to me both fortune and freedom, fall forever back into the waves... Oh, what a release, my friends! I had never known a more intense one.

We finally arrived in Livorno, where I had the advantage of going ashore in the best possible condition. I dismissed my men, sold my vessel, and, immediately converting my assets into bills of exchange on Marseille, after resting a few days, I made my way to that city by land, no longer wishing to expose myself to the dangerous hazards of an element whose inconstancy I had already experienced so well.

Marseille is a delightful city, where one finds at once everything that can gratify the passions of libertinism, in every form. Excellent fare, a divine climate, and an abundance of objects of pleasure—what more was needed to keep a debauchee like me

there? I had not resumed ecclesiastical dress; certain I could reclaim its privileges whenever I wished, I was glad to enjoy for a time the freedoms of civilian attire. I rented a charming house on the port, engaged an excellent cook, two girls to serve me, and two very capable procurers, assigning one to supply young men and the other women; both served me so well that, in my first year, I had already seen more than a thousand boys and nearly twelve hundred young women. In Marseille there exists a group of such creatures, known as 'Chaffrecane,' composed of children between twelve and fifteen years old, working in manufactories or workshops, who provide the libertines of that city with the most attractive objects imaginable. I soon exhausted this class and did not take long to grow weary of it, as I had of everything else; whenever wrongdoing did not accompany my pleasure, I found it impossible to enjoy it. I therefore began, in accordance with these principles, to seek means of setting both my talents and my tastes into motion at once.

As I was forming such plans, one of my agents brought me a young woman one day, about eighteen to twenty years old, of the most exquisite beauty imaginable, and as virtuous, I was assured, as Minerva herself; it was only the extreme poverty in which she found herself that had driven her to this dreadful step, and I was begged to place her, if I could, without taking advantage of her distress. Even had she not been as lovely as daylight, the mere condition in which she was presented to me would have been enough to inflame my mind; to amuse myself with her and cheat her was the first scheme my imagination suggested, and it was to carry out this pious plan that I dismissed my man after having him usher his prey into my boudoir. Struck by her features, I found myself unable to undertake anything before questioning her about her birth. "Alas, sir," she replied, "I was born in Lyon; my mother was named Henriette, and I am called H  l  ne. The victim of a brother's crime, who had abused her, my unhappy mother, they say, perished on the scaffold. I am

the fruit of that horrible incest, and the terrible misfortunes resulting from my birth have caused all those of my life; until the age of eleven I lived only on charity; a lady then took me in, taught me to work, and I would not be in the dreadful situation in which you see me had I not had the misfortune to lose her. Since then, I have lacked employment, and I have preferred to beg my bread rather than give myself up to libertinism. Be generous, sir; relieve me without abusing my condition, and you will be covered with the blessings of heaven and of me." H  l  ne lowered her eyes after this speech, little suspecting the extraordinary turmoil she had just stirred in every part of my being; it was impossible for me not to recognize in this charming creature the child I had had by my cousin Henriette, that unfortunate victim of my cousin Alexandre's crime and of my own dreadful wickedness; never did any girl resemble her mother more, and even had H  l  ne said nothing, it would still have been easy for me to recall her origin merely by looking at her. "My child," I said, "your account is full of interest, and perhaps it ought to affect me more than another; but it is nonetheless certain that you will obtain nothing from me without the most absolute submission to all that is about to be required of you. Begin by undressing." — "Oh, sir!" — "No resistance, my dear, I do not like it; and you have nothing to expect from me unless you yield with the utmost resignation to all my whims." Tears were H  l  ne's only reply, and when she perceived, from the brutality of my actions, that I had little inclination to heed her pleas, she yielded, covering my breast with her tears. H  l  ne had too many charms and too many claims upon the heart of a libertine such as myself for me even to conceive the idea of sparing her; never was there a finer skin, never hips so fresh and rounded, never a surer innocence; my passion, furious, soon overcame it, and she quickly became a mother in her turn. Such, my friends, was the origin of the birth of Olympe, whom you see me still enjoy every day in your seraglio, and who unites, as you see, the triple distinction of being at once my daughter, my granddaughter, and my niece.

I soon passed, with Hélène, from incest to further abuse; I used her in every way my frenzy dictated, moving from one degradation to another; from there I went on to force her mouth—she might have offered me a thousand forms of pleasure, and still my violent desires would not have been satisfied. Tired of using her, I beat and slapped her, subjecting her to every humiliation; there was not a single excess of cruelty of which I did not make her the victim during the more than four hours that this first session lasted. Sated with debauchery, I thought I should finally reveal to her who I was. “Hélène,” I said, holding her still naked upon my knees, “would you feel any horror at finding again the incestuous father who caused your mother to be hanged after violating her?” — “You make me shudder.” — “And if that monster existed... if he were in your arms, Hélène... within you...” I continued as I pressed myself against her. Hélène fainted. My violent movements soon brought her back to consciousness. When I had finished, I said, “My child...

“I have told you enough to undeceive you; well then, know your father—and all his fury.

“Yes, it is to me that you owe your life. Your mother’s brother and I were the cause of that unfortunate mother’s death; but all is repaired by the child I have just set about giving you. Stay with me; I need a woman to serve my pleasures and watch over my interests; be that woman, and have no scruples. Remember that you must yield to everything with me; at times a victim, at others an accomplice, there is not a single one of my desires you must not serve, and at the slightest resistance I might not stop at casting you back into the dreadful state in which you first presented yourself to me: one of the conspirators against your mother’s life could very well become your executioner. Hélène threw herself at my feet, begged me to think no more of the wrongs done to the one who had given her birth, and promised to make me forget them through boundless submission. From that moment, I installed her in my house as a housekeeper; and gentle Hélène, in Marseille, took the place of my Clémentia of Messina.”

It was some time after that encounter that I fell madly in love with a sixteen-year-old boy, as handsome as Adonis, but whose coldness—caused by the love he felt for a girl of his own age—drove me to despair day after day. Imbert, as the young man was called, had nevertheless placed his trust in me, and soon even offered me his friendship, because of the opportunities I provided for him to see his mistress at my home. Euphémie was tall, with a figure made for painting, and a pleasant face, no doubt, but infinitely inferior in charms to the delightful young man who had turned my head. A friend of Euphémie's father and mother, with whom I had become acquainted solely because of my plan to serve Imbert, scarcely a day went by without us visiting one another. It was within this intimacy that I conceived, in order to enjoy Imbert, the most diabolical scheme that had yet emerged from my brain. I began by painting a strikingly negative picture of the young Imbert in the minds of Euphémie's parents; and, through cunning and trickery, I led the young man into such traps that I succeeded in making him detestable to his mistress's parents. Once matters had reached this stage, it was not difficult for me to turn Imbert in turn against the people by whom he seemed so ill-regarded; and from bitterness to crime, in a passionate soul, there is often but a single step. Imbert realised that as long as Euphémie's parents were alive, he could never hope for happiness. Yet they were young, and Imbert was very impatient. I take advantage of a moment of passion. With insidious words, I offer both the evil and the remedy. Imbert, seduced, is now concerned with only one thing: will Euphémie want the murderer of her parents? — And why reveal this deed to her? — She will suspect it. — Never; besides, I shall act myself; it is only your consent that I ask for. — Oh! Heaven, do you doubt that I shall give it to you? — I want it in writing. — I consent...And here is the document that Imbert gave me:

“Exasperated by the persecutions I endure, I ask my friend Jérôme to procure me some realgar, so as to bring about the swift

death of Euphémie's parents, who persist in refusing me their daughter."

Naivety, that confidence of youth, causes her, as we see, to fall into many traps. However thinly veiled as this one was, brave Imbert fell for it without a second thought; and no sooner had I got hold of the note than I poisoned my lover's enemies at supper. Euphémie had no suspicion; but her deep mourning and grief nevertheless compelled her to be away for a few weeks. An elderly aunt took her back to the country. 'Imbert,' I said to the young man, 'this is a manoeuvre I do not like; her absence may cool your mistress's affections; it may rekindle in her soul the memories of her parents; let us not leave her there; grant me fresh powers, and I shall rush to snatch her away. Imbert signs a second time to whatever I ask. At the head of a band of brigands, whom I pay by the weight of gold, I make my way into the aunt's estate; I stab her with my own hand; my men, to whom I leave the plundering of this rich farmstead, swiftly dispose of all the servants. Euphémie is taken to an isolated country estate, deliberately rented by me, near Marseille: I take Imbert and Hélène there. "And there, my friend," I say to the young man, "you see all I am doing for you; it is high time you rewarded me." — "What do you demand?" — "Your arse." — "My arse!" — "You shall not have Euphémie until I have obtained what I ask." — "Oh, Jérôme, you know how much I abhor such a crime!" — "Imbert, here is your mistress; you hear her, I continued, urging him to listen in on a conversation I was deliberately having between Hélène and Euphémie; "if you do not let yourself be sodomised, you will never possess her." — "Well then! Satisfy yourself, you wicked man; but let Euphémie know nothing of it... she'd be horrified by me..." — "Oh! believe me, never..." And as I spoke these words, my raging cock penetrated the most delightful arse I'd fucked in a long time. I grind, I pound this handsome young man, I fill his arse with cum, but without calming the violent agitation I'm in. These are the horrors I have con-



ceived; these are the horrors my rotten soul craves. "Just a moment," I said to the young man as I withdrew from behind him; and, after locking him in my room, I rushed into the one where Euphémie was. "Hold this girl for me," I said to Hélène; "I must fuck her." Screams could be heard; barbaric precautions soon stifled them; and there I was in the mistress's pretty virgin pussy, still throbbing with the pleasures the lover's arse had just given me. "Go and fetch the young man I've locked in that neighbouring room," I said to Hélène; "get one of my servants to help you, and above all hold him tight when he comes in." Imbert appeared; whilst his astonishment was beyond words, the pleasure I felt the moment he entered was surely far greater. "Scoundrell!" Imbert says to me, trying to throw himself at me; "O infernal monster!" but he is well restrained. "My friend," I reply to the young man, undaunted by his threats; "you see this dagger; I shall pierce the heart of the object of your desires with it this very moment, if you do not come and let me fuck your arse whilst I'm fucking her." Imbert trembles; his girlfriend, who cannot speak, encourages him with a finger; he takes his place. For me, this is the signal to switch positions; I nimbly move from her cunt to her arse, without altering the intensity of my pleasure; and I revel in the divine delight of kissing the lover's buttocks whilst sodomising his mistress. But poor Imbert, whom Hélène holds back from my frenzy, does not know how far I have taken my treachery at the crucial moment of climax... at that terrible moment when the unprincipled libertine immerses himself with such delight in the final refinements of infamy. I bring him down; I show him his mistress, drowned in blood, and treacherously pierced by me with sixteen dagger thrusts to the heart and breasts. He faints; Hélène brings him round; but he regains his senses only to see Euphémie breathe her last, and to shower me with invectives. "You reckless youth," I say to him, revelling delightfully in my crime, "look at your notes, and all the rights you have granted me over you... If you utter a word, I will destroy you; this very murder will be deemed your doing; Hélène and I

shall testify to your atrocities, and you shall perish on the scaffold. I'm still hard: let's see your arse. I once fucked a mistress on her lover's corpse; today I want to fuck the lover on his mistress's, so I can decide which of these two acts gives the most pleasure." Never has there been such madness. Hélène made me fuck her beautiful arse throughout all this; the servant, who had helped her, was sodomising me; I fucked Euphémie's corpse; I had her lover fuck it. Sated with horrors, I sent for the bailiff; Hélène and I are testifying against Imbert; the notes stand as proof: I add that, having, against our will, led his mistress into that house, this is where his jealousy had led him. Imbert, despite his young age, was found guilty of such atrocious crimes that he was executed. And I breathe a sigh of relief! And I, the instrument, the instigator of all this chaos, live in peace! Heaven had reserved me to commit others: I wasted no time. Hélène was not to be trusted; she was a gossip. I followed Machiavelli's maxim: 'Either one must never have accomplices,' said that great man, 'or one must slaughter them after having used them.' In the same month, in the same countryside, in the same room, I condemned Hélène to the most brutal torment I had yet inflicted on any victim: I returned from there calmly to Marseille to bless the fortune of the ever-assured success that it pleased her to grant to my crimes.

I spent several more years in that city without anything occurring that would interest you—much debauchery, swindling, and small secret murders, but nothing remarkable. It was then that I heard tell of your celebrated abbey of Sainte-Marie-des-Bois. The desire to join you inspired in me the notion of a feigned conversion and a return to clerical dress. I learned that this was possible, provided one made certain sacrifices to the Dataria in Rome. I hastened to that capital of Christian superstition; I made a sort of general confession to the Holy Father, requested readmission to the order, gave half my fortune to the Church, and, through this generous offering, obtained the restoration of all my rights and permission to reside at Sainte-Marie.

Such is the moment that brought me among you, my dear confrères; may God grant that I remain here a long time! For if crime has its attractions elsewhere, it surely has far greater ones here, where, committed in shadow and silence, it is free from all the fears and dangers that so often accompany it in the world.

## CHAPITRE XII.

**Fin des aventures du couvent — Comment Justine le quitte. — Auberge où les voyageurs feront bien de ne pas s'arrêter.**

Far from calming the general uproar, as Severino had flattered himself they would, the stories they had just heard had so electrified everyone's minds that they wanted to change the objects of their debauchery at once. "Let's keep only six women," said Ambroise, "and replace the others with boys; I'm tired of seeing nothing but mounds and breasts around us for the last four hours; and when we have such pretty Ganymedes in a cage, I can't understand why we surround ourselves with cunts." — "Well said!" cried Severino, whose cock, in its fury, protruded six inches above the table; "let us quickly fetch eight boys; and let us keep only Justine, Octavie, and those four beautiful creatures aged sixteen to eighteen, with whom Jérôme is currently surrounded." The scene changes; boys appear; and here are our monks, milling about, getting fucked, and using the girls now only as the objects of their cruel lusts. "Oh, for God's sake," said Ambroise, withdrawing his swollen cock from the arse of a charming thirteen-year-old boy, "I know not what I might imagine, what I might do, in the astonishing delirium that now fills my head. I'm seized by fits of rage against this little girl," he continued, pointing at Octavia... "She wouldn't be the first we've sentenced to reform the very day she arrived... We're overflowing with new women; there are still two or three more to arrive this week, who are better than these; among you, there is a seventeen-year-old creature, built like the Graces, who struck me

as the most beautiful person to have entered here in a long time; let's put this little slut on trial; we've all fucked her; there isn't one of us who hasn't put his cock in her cunt, arse or mouth; if we start again, it will always be the same, and..." — "I object," said Jérôme; "not everyone tires as quickly as Ambroise; we still have a thousand pleasures left, each more piquant than the last, to savour with this young girl; let us vex her, torment her, nothing could be more just; but let us not sacrifice her just yet."

"Well then!" said Ambroise, who was attacking her, holding her between his legs, "this, then, is what I condemn her to, since I am denied what I desire: I demand that whichever of us doesn't feel like shitting hold a dagger to her throat and plunge it in irrevocably and without appeal, if she doesn't swallow the other five's turds..." — "Delicious... divine," cried Sylvestre and Severino. "I'm madly in love with Ambroise's mind: it's been a long time," said Antonin, "yes, as a man of honour, it's been a very long time since I've only unloaded according to that fellow's ideas. But what will become of those who have shat?" — "Justine," says Ambroise, "will be condemned to wipe their arses with her tongue; another girl will take hold of one of our fuckers' cocks and shove it up their arses one by one, whilst a young boy sucks them off and another farts in their mouths." — "And so it will all be over?" asked Sylvestre. "By God, that's quite a punishment, swallowing five turds; I eat a dozen of them every day for my own pleasure." — "No, no," said Severino, "it won't all be over: as and when the monk who has shat has just been fucked, he'll have the right to impose a bloody penance on the victim." — "So be it, said Ambroise, "with the proviso that I accept the deal; I wouldn't want it otherwise."

The planned indignities began; they reached their height; the girl's youth and beauty only served to inflame these scoundrels all the more; and satiety, far more than compassion, in finally sending her back to her room, restored to her, at least for a few hours, the calm she so badly needed. Justine, who had taken this pretty little girl into her heart with the greatest affection, and

who wished to give her the place in her heart that Omphale had long occupied, did everything in her power to be appointed her governess; but Severino insisted that our heroine should come and sleep in his cell. We have already mentioned that this beautiful girl had the misfortune of arousing the sodomite's hideous desires more keenly than any other; for a month she had been sleeping with him almost every night; he had sodomised few women with such assiduity; he found in her a distinct superiority in the shape of her buttocks, a heat, an indescribable tightness in the anus: is more required to determine the inclinations of a sodomite? But, exhausted that night, the lecher needed to experiment; no doubt fearing he was not yet causing enough pain with the monstrous sword he was armed with, he imagined this time sodomising Justine with a dildo twelve inches long and seven inches in circumference. The poor, frightened girl tried to protest; she was met only with threats and blows; she was therefore forced to offer up her arse; with a series of jolts, the weapon penetrated deep inside: Justine let out piercing screams; the monk found it amusing; after a few thrusts, he suddenly withdrew the instrument and plunged himself into the hole he had just opened. What a whim! Is this not precisely the very opposite of what men ought to desire?

In the morning, somewhat refreshed, he resolved to try another torment; he showed Justine an instrument far larger than the one from the day before—this one hollow, fitted with a piston that expelled water with astonishing force through an opening that gave the jet a breadth of more than two inches; the device itself measured nine inches in circumference and thirteen in length. Severino filled it with very hot water and meant to force it into her from the front; terrified by such a design, Justine threw herself at his feet to beg for mercy, but the monk was in one of those violent states in which pity is no longer heard, where passions, far more eloquent, smother it and replace it with a cruelty all the more dangerous; he threatened her with his full

fury if she did not obey, and Justine yielded, trembling. The infernal machine penetrated two-thirds of its length, and the tearing it caused, joined to the extreme heat, nearly deprived her of her senses; meanwhile, the superior, never ceasing to revile the parts he abused, had himself pleased by one of his attendants upon the body of another. After a quarter hour of this abuse, which Justine could scarcely endure, the piston was released and sent the scalding water deep within her. She fainted; Severino exulted; he continued his assault upon her in that state of stupor, even gripping her breasts to bring her back to consciousness, until at last she opened her eyes. "What is the matter?" said the monk; "this is nothing—we treat such charms far more harshly here. A salad of thorns—by God! well peppered, well soaked in vinegar—driven in with the point of a knife, that is what is needed to revive such charms; at the first fault you commit, I shall condemn you to it," said the wretch, carried away by the thought... "Yes, girl, I condemn you to it—and perhaps to far worse—before two months have passed." At last day broke, and Justine was dismissed.

On entering, she found her new friend in tears; she did what she could to calm her, but it is no easy thing to resign oneself to so dreadful a change of condition. Octavie possessed a deep reserve of virtue, sensitivity, and religion, which made her situation seem all the more terrible to her; yet, comforted to have found a soul that answered to her own, she was soon bound to our gentle orphan by the closest attachment, and together they found in that union greater strength to endure their shared misfortunes.

But the unhappy Octavie did not long enjoy these consolations. It had been rightly said to Justine that seniority had no influence on these "reforms"; dictated solely by the monks' caprice or by their fear of future discovery, one might be subjected to them after eight days as after twenty years. Octavie had been at the convent scarcely two months when Jérôme came to announce her fate, though it was he who had seemed to seek her

out with the greatest care, with whom she had most frequently lain, even as recently as the very eve of this terrible catastrophe. She was not alone: a divine creature of twenty-three, raised in the convent since birth, a girl beyond all praise, whose tender and compassionate nature harmonized perfectly with the romantic beauty she had received from nature—an angel, in short—was condemned the same day; and, contrary to their usual custom, the monks decided they would be sacrificed together. This exquisite being was named Mariette, said to be Sylvestre's daughter. The greatest preparations were ordered for this bloody ceremony; and as our heroine was unfortunate enough to be among those chosen that day to witness these horrors, one may be forgiven for dwelling once more on the abominable excesses of these monsters.

One can easily imagine that the choice of Justine to attend these orgies was nothing but a refinement of the most dreadful cruelty; they knew the extreme sensitivity of her character, they knew she was Octavie's friend—what more was needed to ensure she would be included in the spectacle? They had acted the same way with Fleur-d'Épine, beautiful, gentle, twenty years old, and Mariette's most devoted companion; she too was made to witness these funerals. All these details serve to reveal the nature of these wretches, and it is not without purpose that we lay them bare.

Ten other women, all aged between fifteen and twenty-five, and of the most sublime beauty; six young girls, chosen for the same reason—the finest features—all aged between thirteen and fifteen; six men aged twenty to twenty-five, selected for the thickness or length of their member; and finally three maids of between thirty-five and forty years of age, for domestic service; such were the subjects admitted to the infernal sacrifice that was being prepared.

As is known, supper was held in the cellar, situated near those where the victims were already confined. They assembled there at nightfall; but on such occasions it was customary for each



monk first to spend an hour in his cell, in private reflection, with two girls or two boys chosen from among those invited, and it was with Justine, and another girl of her rank named Aurore—almost as beautiful as our heroine—that Sylvestre, the father of one of the victims, chose to shut himself in.

We shall now describe the ceremonies observed during this preliminary “retreat.” The monk, sunk into an armchair, his breeches unfastened and most often naked from the waist down, listened with evident pleasure to one of the girls, who approached him with rods in hand, to address him in roughly the following terms, to which he replied as we shall see.

“Here you are then, wretch, resolved upon the most dreadful of crimes, and murder is to stain you?” — “I hope so.” — “What! monster, no counsel, no warning, no fear of heaven or of men can prevent this horror?” — “There is no divine or human power capable of stopping me.” — “But God, who sees you?” — “I don’t give a damn about God.” — “And the hell that awaits you?” — “I defy hell.” — “Men, who may one day expose your crimes?” — “I mock men and their judgments; I think only of crime, I love only crime, I live only for crime, and it is to crime alone that every moment of my life must be devoted.”

It was then necessary to dwell upon the nature of the crime, its particulars and circumstances; thus Justine was required to say to Sylvestre: “What! wretched man, do you not realize that it is your own daughter who is concerned—that it is she you are about to sacrifice, a charming creature, born of your blood?” — “What do such ties matter to me? They are only additional motives; I would have her belong to me still more closely... be more dear to me... more beautiful, and so on.”

Then the two women seized the lecher; one bent him over her, the other lashed him with all her might; they took turns; and whilst flogging him, they never ceased to shower the man with invectives and reproaches, always drawing their words from the crime the scoundrel was plotting. As soon as he was bleeding, they would take turns respectfully kneeling before his penis, and

tried to make him stand to attention by sucking him. Then the monk had them undress in turn, and indulged in whatever lewdness took his fancy, provided it left no mark on the girl's body, which was to be presented intact to the assembly.

Everything that had just been said was carried out to the letter by Sylvestre; and once these preliminaries were over, he threw Aurore and Justine down, bent them over, and pressed them one on top of the other, and took them both like that for a few moments; he slapped their bottoms, he spanked them, ordered them to worship his arse, and to lick it as proof of the respectful homage they paid him; and, having worked himself into a feverish frenzy at the thought of the extreme pleasure he was about to derive from the planned infanticide, he descended to the cellar, leaning on both of these girls who, that evening, were to perform, as was the custom, the duties of chambermaids in his service.

Everyone was assembled; Sylvestre arrived last. The two victims, draped in black crepe and crowned with cypress, were placed side by side upon a pedestal raised to the height of the table, at one end of it; Octavie faced forward, Mariette was turned the other way; their draperies, drawn back on those parts, left them completely exposed. The women were arranged in a line, the two groups of men in two others, the monks in the center, and the three duennas surrounded the victims. Sylvestre, charged with delivering the address, mounted a platform facing the pedestal and spoke as follows:

“If there is anything sacred in nature, my friends, it is, without doubt, the imprescriptible right she grants to man to dispose of his fellow: murder is the foremost of her laws—of that nature incomprehensible to fools, yet which philosophers such as we know so well how to analyze; it is through murder that she daily reclaims the rights taken from her by propagation, and without private or political killings, the world would be so crowded it could no longer be inhabited. But surely, if ever there is a mo-

ment when murder becomes a delicious pleasure, you must admit, my friends, that it is precisely in the case before us: is there anything more delightful than to rid oneself of a woman one has long enjoyed? What a divine way to answer satiety! what a tribute to disgust! Look at that arse," continued the speaker (pointing to Mariette), "that arse which for so long served our pleasures; look at this cunt" (pointing to Octavie), "which, though less tried, has no less sated all our cocks! Is it not time that such objects, now detestable, should at last return to the nothingness from which they ought only to have emerged for our delights? O my friends, what a pleasure! In a few hours the earth will cover these execrable bodies; they will no longer disgust our lustful appetites... they will no longer offend our eyes... in a few hours these wretches will have lived; scarcely a faint trace of them will remain in our minds; we shall preserve nothing of them but the memory of their sufferings. One of them, Octavie—gentle, beautiful, timid, virtuous, modest, and sensitive—was endowed with the finest body imaginable; yet she was little compliant; her natural pride never abandoned her, and you will recall that scarcely a day passed without your being obliged to subject her to the various punishments attached by your rules to the offenses of which she was continually guilty. She could never conceal her profound disgust for your ways, her aversion to your sacred customs, her hatred for your respectable persons, and, faithful to her dreadful principles of religion, you have often seen her invoke her God even at the very moment when she served your lusts. Jérôme set some value on her, I know it; Jérôme loved her arse, he celebrated it almost every day; and although Jérôme no longer stands, although the mouth has become his only refuge in his weakness, you know that Jérôme, powerfully aroused by the superiority of this girl's buttocks, has sodomized her more than twenty times. Yet it is at Jérôme's own request that the sentence has been pronounced, and Jérôme is so just that you will now see him, I am certain, become one of Octavie's most relentless executioners. Look, my friends—observe the eyes with

which he regards her; do they not suggest the lion coveting the lamb that is about to become his prey? Happy effects of satiety! one would think you blunt every spring of the soul, and yet it is from you that the sweetest transports of lust are born.

“Beside that beautiful Octavie, Mariette now presents herself to you: the arse she shows you has long inflamed your desires; there is not a single pleasure in the world to which you have not subjected her. Mariette was beautiful and gentle. O Nature! let me shed a few tears here...” — and the scoundrel feigned them — “I feel that your voice cannot be entirely stifled, that one is not a father with impunity. But all such sentiments must be extinguished in this tribunal of truth, and it is to truth alone that the speaker must render homage. How many vices were mingled with Mariette’s virtues! She was capricious, irritable, rebellious toward your opinions and your customs; always preferring the company of the prudish women of the seraglio; seeking to learn, even to follow, a religion of which we had never spoken to her, and which she knew only through the conversations of those devotees she so carefully sought out. Mariette lacked compliance in her duties; she had to be pressed to fulfill them, and she never anticipated anything. Few girls have been punished more than Mariette; and despite the preferences you have often seen me show her, how many times, sacrificing all to justice, have you not heard me denounce her myself before the tribunal of your corrections. It is I who today demand her death; it is at my proposal that it has been accepted; and it is I who beg you to make it dreadful: follow the plan I shall prescribe, and never will a victim have been more cruelly tormented.

“Courage, my friends,” the speaker continued with enthusiasm; “we have now, thanks to the firmness of our characters, reached the final degree of reflective corruption; let nothing restrain us any longer, and let us remember well that the only unhappy man in crime is he who stops halfway. It is only by indulging in crime that one comes to discover its true attractions:

wholly unlike women, who weary us in proportion to the number of times they have given themselves to us, crime, on the contrary, never delights us more warmly than when we have glutted ourselves upon it; and the reason is simple enough—it is necessary to be familiar with it in order to know all its charms. It is only by pursuing it relentlessly that one comes at last to adore it. The first act repels—it is the effect of inexperience; the second amuses; the third intoxicates; and if nothing in this happy career opposed the violent desires of man, he would soon mark every moment of his existence by crimes alone. To doubt that the greatest sum of happiness available to man on earth lies irrevocably in crime is as absurd as to doubt that the sun is the prime mover of vegetation. Yes, my friends, just as that sublime star regenerates the universe, so crime is the center of all the moral fires that inflame us: the sun brings forth the fruits of the earth; crime makes every passion germinate in the heart of man; it alone kindles them and gives them life; it alone is useful to man. And what does it matter that crime offends another, if it delights us individually? Do we exist for others, or for ourselves? Can such a question even be asked seriously? If selfishness is the first law of reason and of nature—if we live and exist only for ourselves—then nothing can be sacred to us except what delights us. Everything that departs from this is false, subject to error, and fit only to be despised. I sometimes hear it said that crime is dangerous to man: I would very much like to be told how. Will it be said that it is dangerous because it violates the rights of others? But so long as others retain the right to avenge themselves, does not equality of rights remain intact? From that moment, crime violates nothing. It is astonishing how the eternal sophisms of stupidity manage to destroy the sum of human happiness! Oh, how much happier all would be if all agreed to enjoy themselves! But virtue presents itself; they are deceived by its seductive appearance; they allow themselves to be led astray by it—and thus all the foundations of happiness are destroyed. Let us therefore banish forever this perfidious virtue from our

happy society; let us detest it as it deserves; let the most extreme contempt and the severest punishments be the just reward among us of those who would embrace its laws. As for me, I renew my oath to flee it... to detest it all my life. O my happy confrères! let every heart answer my voice, and let there be found within these walls nothing but executioners and victims!”

Sylvestre, showered with praise, descended from the podium, and the scenes opened. People took up positions in the corners of the hall, whose hexagonal shape provided a private nook for everyone. Bundles of candles lit these corners, each of which contained a large ottoman and a chest of drawers, stocked with everything that the most unbridled lust... ..the most atrocious lust might require of these scoundrels. Two girls, a young male lover, and a pimp escorted the monks to their alcoves. The duennas first brought down Octavie, then Mariette, and presented them, naked and in chains, to the alcove of each of the monks.

The victim, on this first round, was to be subjected to such a humiliation that, even if he survived, he would be scarred for life. Each monk was, at the same time, to carve onto the victim’s shoulders or buttocks the form of torture to which he was condemning him. Severino, who was being sodomised whilst he sodomised a catamite, fucking arseholes left and right, recalling one of the passions recounted by Jerome, pulled out one of Mariette’s teeth and burned Octavie’s nipples. We do not know what sentence he pronounced; nor have the sentences dictated by the others come down to us.

Clément broke one of Octavie’s fingers and inflicted a fairly deep wound on Mariette’s right buttock; he was being sucked while he masturbated the men around him.

Antonin plucked both their arses with the Turkish hair remover, known as Rusma:<sup>6</sup>[1] he was fingering Justine’s, and licking Aurore’s, whilst being sodomised.

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<sup>6</sup> Rusma, a mineral, ink-like stone; its mines are found in Galatia. The Grand Seigneur derives an income of 30,000 ducats a year from it. It is very rare in France and is sold there at the price of gold. No

Ambroise, who was being sodomised and who was returning the favour to Fleur-d'Épine whilst sucking a cunt, gouged out both of Mariette's beautiful eyes with a golden needle, and he cut off the little finger of Octavie's right hand; his cum spurted out, which made him so furious with Fleur-d'Épine that he immediately gave her three hundred lashes, even though he was no longer hard, and there was nothing but vengeance in his deed.

Sylvestre larded his daughter's buttocks and nipples, and bit off both of Octavie's nipples; he was being whipped at the time, and his young lover was sucking his mouth, whilst a girl sucked his cock.

Jérôme, whom two girls, on their knees, were sucking in turn, and who was being sodomised relentlessly, cut off Mariette's right ear and, using a pair of pliers, tore a large chunk of flesh from Octavie's beautiful arse.

Once this round was over, they deliberated on the next object:

Would the victims be sacrificed in this way in detail? Would they be exposed to the fury of all six monks at once, or would only one serve as executioner while the others observed? Before deciding the matter, the six proposals concerning the torments were read aloud; several argued that each monk should in turn impose them, and it was agreed to proceed in rotations. But Sylvestre requested two conditions, which were unanimously granted: first, that the two victims be, before anything further, exposed for an hour to the monks' private pleasures, and that the tortures begin only afterward; second, that he alone would deliver the fatal blow to his daughter. These resolutions taken, a couch was placed in the center of the vault; the six boys and twelve women surrounded it, forming the most lascivious and libertine groups. The fuckers were to follow the monks and fuck them in the arse while they carried out their acts.

Severino fucked both of their arses, leaving unmistakable marks of his brutality on each.

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trace of hair remains on the areas where it has been applied.

Clément did not fuck them, but he cruelly flogged both victims; he left them battered and bruised.

Antonin fucked both cunts; then, fearing, he said, that he might have impregnated them, he thrust a long pin into each vagina, but so firmly... so deeply, that it could never be retrieved.

Ambroise sodomized both victims and squeezed their throats until they fainted.. Sylvestre fucked both cunts, making more than twenty crucial incisions on the stomachs, breasts and buttocks of these creatures with the tip of a penknife. The scoundrel came, leaving a three-inch mark on his daughter's right cheek.

Jérôme whipped them both with a steel-tipped whip, which drew blood and tore whole chunks of flesh from their arses; he then fucked both their mouths.

The rounds began again; and the monks each took up their positions in their corners, with girls or boys, or both, depending on the whim that excited them at that moment.

Justine was with Ambroise. Could one believe that this wretch had the cruelty to demand that she herself carry out a torment upon the body of Octavie, her beloved? And when she flatly refused, Justine was denounced to the assembly, which convened at once to pronounce the punishment due to so grave an offense. The penal code was opened: Justine fell under the seventh article. But as it prescribed only four hundred lashes, three members proposed subjecting her instead to the penalty set forth in the twelfth article;<sup>7</sup> the other three opposed this, not because they found it too cruel, but simply because such an execution would interrupt the proceedings too much. Justine was therefore merely condemned to receive two hundred lashes from the hand of each monk, which were inflicted upon her at once, and with that particular intensity commonly employed when they were aroused—as these gentlemen indeed were.

Fleur-d'Épine, who was in Sylvestre's service, soon subjected the company to a similar offence: Mariette's barbaric father

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<sup>7</sup> See page 147 of the second volume.



sought to force his daughter's friend to brand his nipples with a red-hot iron. Fleur-d'Épine resisted; Sylvestre was furious... Sylvestre, who was hard as a rock and whose semen was oozing from every pore, took it upon himself to administer the punishment; and, using a thick club, he beat the wretch so cruelly that she had to be carried away, nearly dead. This constituted a breach of the society's regulations. Severino called Sylvestre to account for his conduct; punishments were to be imposed by the assembly itself and carried out collectively. But, by proving that one was aroused, and that the insult was too violent to be tolerated, one was acquitted on the spot. One can well imagine that Sylvestre made use of this means. Another girl was brought in, and no further thought was given to an incident which nevertheless nearly cost this unfortunate girl her life. However, the ill-treatment continued and intensified to such an extent that, had it not been interrupted to sit down to supper, the victims would never have reached the prescribed end of orgies of this sort. They were therefore handed over to the deacons, who bathed them, refreshed them, dressed their wounds, and placed them back on the pedestal, where they remained naked throughout the entire supper, exposed to whatever indignities the monks might choose to heap upon them.

It is easy to imagine that at such parties, lust, lewdness and depravity were always taken to the extreme. At this one, the monks would eat only from the girls' arses; another, at their feet, sucked them in turn, both cock and balls, and it was in the little boys' arses that the candles were thrust; their napkins had been used to wipe arses for a fortnight, and four large bowls of shit formed the four corners. The three naked matrons served the monks, offering them only wines with which they had previously washed their buttocks, pussies, armpits, mouths and arses. Each monk had, quite apart from all this, a small bow and several arrows by his side, with which he amused himself from time to time by piercing the bodies of his victims, which immediately

produced a small fountain of blood, the spurting streams of which sprinkled the dishes.

As for the food, it was exquisite; there was a profusion of delicacies, an abundance of fine fare; the rarest wines were served only up to the dessert; from then on, only the strongest spirits were served, and heads were soon turned.

"I know nothing," said Ambroise, stammering, "that blends better than the pleasures of drunkenness, gluttony, lust, and cruelty; it is astonishing what one does, what one invents, when one's head is thoroughly inflamed; and the strength lent by Bacchus to the goddess of lust always turns to the advantage of the latter." — "That is so true," said Antonin, "that I would never indulge in debauchery except in the deepest intoxication; it is only then that I am truly in the mood." — "Our girls," said Severino, "would not agree to that condition; for they are badly treated when our heads are electrified by wine or spirits." At that very moment a terrible cry was heard, coming from Severino's feet. That monster, without motive, without any reason but the desire to do harm, had just driven his knife into the left breast of an eighteen-year-old girl, beautiful as Venus, who was pleasuring him. The blood flowed in abundance; the unfortunate girl fainted. Severino, though superior, was questioned as to the cause of this cruelty. "She bit me while attending to me," he replied; "it was vengeance that made me act." — "By God," said Clément, "the offense is atrocious; I demand that the whore be punished according to the fifteenth article of the code, which orders that any girl who shows disrespect to the monks be hanged by the feet for an hour." — "Yes," said Jérôme, "but that applies to ordinary circumstances; in the midst of libertine service, the penalty is more severe: it is a matter of two months' imprisonment on bread and water, with flogging twice a day; I demand the execution of the regulation." — "As for me," said Sylvestre, "I do not see that the case is exactly provided for by the law; I call for a rigorous punishment, and one equally unforeseen; I want the offender to be punished by everyone, and

for that purpose she shall spend a quarter of an hour with each member, in one of the darkest dungeons of this underground place, each being ordered to treat her so harshly that she will be confined to her bed for a year: Severino will go last.” The proposal was adopted. The victim, whose bleeding they took care not to staunch, was already in such a state that she had to be carried to the place assigned. These wretches went in one after another; and after unspeakable abuses, she was brought back to her bed, where she died the next day.

Scarcely had our six libertines reassembled after that infernal expedition when the duennas announced that they needed to relieve themselves. “In the dishes, in the dishes,” said Clément. “In our mouths,” said Sylvestre. This latter opinion prevailed; and there were our monks, each fitted out with one of the old women, set upon the table and braced over the libertine’s face, which she soon inundated with foul gases and shit.

“To make use of these old wretches,” said Jérôme, “when we have at our disposal so many young and pretty objects, is, to my mind, the clearest proof we can offer of our dreadful depravity.” — “And who doubts,” replied Severino, “that old age, filth, and ugliness often give far greater pleasures than freshness and beauty? The effluvia that emanate from such bodies have a far sharper sting; do you not see how many people prefer game gone high to fresh meat?” — “For my part, I am entirely of that opinion,” said Sylvestre, launching at his daughter a dart that struck her right breast and immediately drew blood; “the more ugly, old, and disgusting the object, the better it excites me; and I will prove it to you,” he continued, seizing old Jérôme and shoving his cock up his arse. “I am very flattered by the demonstration,” said Jérôme; “fuck me, my friend, fuck me; even I had to buy the pleasure of having a cock up my arse with more baseness and humiliation, I still wouldn’t find the pleasure too dear.” and the wretch, turning tenderly to fawn over his dear fucker, spat a torrent of wine into his face, released by the pressure his stomach had just endured... such a terrible spurt that Sylvestre,

pushed back by the torrent, found himself splashing the same spray onto Clément's face, beside whom he stood; yet Clément, steadier or deeper sunk in the mire, did not stop eating the compote into which all the sauce had fallen. 'Look at the steadfastness of that fellow,' said Ambroise, who was on the other side; "I'll bet I could shit in his mouth and he wouldn't blink an eye." — "Shit," said Clément; Ambroise complied; Clément swallowed, and the meal came to an end.

The first suggestion was to whip all the young boys on the buttocks, and all the girls on the breasts, interlacing the strokes with precision. Those whipping the boys would remain on the ground; those striking the girls' throats would stand on chairs, against which the girls would lean their backs. "Marvellous!" said Antonin; "but the young men must be forced to defecate whilst they are being whipped, and the girls compelled to urinate during the same operation, and this under the most severe penalties." — "Well said," cried Jérôme, so drunk that he could barely rise from the table. "Things are falling into place." One cannot imagine the barbarity with which these scoundrels flogged and mercilessly tore at the loveliest bottoms in the world and the rose-and-alabaster breasts offered up to their brutality. Here Severino, who was hard as a rock, was tempted by a charming thirteen-year-old boy, whose buttocks were dripping with blood; he seized him, took him into a private room, and brought him back, after a quarter of an hour, in such a state that the assembly was convinced that the superior had, as was his custom with the boys, just employed such cruel methods that the young man might well not recover from them. Jérôme, following the superior's example, had likewise isolated his pleasures; he had led Aurore and another girl of seventeen, a very pretty one, away, and had subjected both of them to such despairing humiliations, to such monstrous acts of ferocity, that both were once again carried back to their rooms.

All eyes then turned to the two victims... Let us be permitted to draw a veil over the atrocities that brought these abominable orgies to an end. Our pen would be unequal to depicting them, and our readers too compassionate to hear them without shuddering. Let it suffice to say that the tortures lasted six hours, during which everything the most ferocious cruelty could devise was employed, interwoven with lascivious episodes of such monstrous kind that neither Nero nor Tiberius ever invented anything comparable.

Sylvestre distinguished himself by his inconceivable fury in tormenting his daughter... a beautiful, sensitive, and charming creature, whom the wretch had, as he had wished, the dreadful pleasure of seeing expire beneath his blows. And such is man, when his passions lead him astray! such is he when his wealth, his influence, or his position places him above the law! Justine, exhausted, was fortunate enough not to be required to spend the night with anyone. She withdrew to her cell, shedding bitter tears over the dreadful fate of her dearest friend, and from that moment thought only of her plan of escape. Fully resolved to risk everything to flee that horrible den, nothing frightened her in carrying it out. What had she to fear in attempting it? Death; and of what was she certain if she remained? Death; and if she succeeded, she would be saved—was there any room for hesitation? But before undertaking it, the fatal examples of vice rewarded were once more to be set before her eyes. It was written in the great book of destiny—that obscure book which no one can fully read—that all those who had tormented her, humiliated her, held her in chains, would continually receive, before her eyes, the reward of their crimes... as though Providence had taken it upon itself to show her the danger or the futility of virtue. Fatal lessons which nevertheless did not correct her, and which, even if she should escape once more from the blade suspended over her head, would not prevent her, she said, from remaining forever the servant of that divinity of her heart.

One morning, without anyone expecting it, Antonin arrived at the seraglio and announced that Severino, a relative and protégé of the pope, had just been appointed by His Holiness as general of the Benedictine order. The very next day the monk departed, in fact without seeing anyone; it was said that another, far more ferocious and debauched, was expected in his place—new reasons for Justine to hasten the execution of her plan.

The day after Severino's departure, the monks were carrying out yet another "reform"; Justine chose that moment to put her design into action, so that, being more occupied, they would pay less attention to her.

It was the beginning of spring; the nights were still long enough to favour her efforts. For two months she had been preparing them with inconceivable secrecy; little by little she had been sawing through the bars of her closet with a poor chisel she had found; already her head could pass through, and from her linen she had fashioned a rope more than sufficient to clear the height of the building. When her clothes had been taken from her, she had taken care, as we believe we have said, to keep her small fortune; she had always hidden it carefully. As she set out, she placed it in her hair, and as soon as she believed her companions asleep, she slipped into her closet. There, clearing the opening she had taken care to conceal each day, she fastened the rope to one of the bars that remained intact, and lowering herself down, she soon reached the ground. That, however, was not what had troubled her most; the six enclosures of thick hedges of which Omphale had spoken to her concerned her far more.

Once below, she discovered that each space, or circular path, left between one hedge and the next was no more than six feet wide, and it was this closeness that made it seem at first glance as though everything in that part formed a single mass of woodland. The night was very dark; following the first of these circular paths, she reached the level of the window of the great vault where the funeral orgies were held; seeing many lights there, she

was bold enough to approach, and distinctly heard Jérôme say to the assembly: "Yes, my friends, I repeat it to you, Justine must be the next to go—nothing is more certain; I hope I shall not find a single voice opposed to my proposal."—"Not one, certainly," replied Antonin, a friend of Severino; "I supported and protected her until now because she pleased that worthy companion of our debauches; my interest having ceased, I am the first to urge that this motion pass without objection." There was but one voice; some even proposed sending for her at once, but, on reflection, it was decided to defer it for a fortnight. O Justine! what horror seized your soul on hearing your sentence thus pronounced! Unhappy girl! you were on the point of losing the strength to take another step. Gathering her courage, however, she hastened on, continuing her circuit until she reached the end of the underground passage; finding no breach, she resolved to make one. She had kept the chisel of which we have spoken; armed with it, she set to work; her hands were torn, nothing stopped her; the hedge was more than two feet thick; she forced an opening and found herself in the second path. What was her astonishment then to feel beneath her feet only a soft, yielding earth, in which she sank to the ankle? The farther she advanced, the deeper grew the darkness. Curious to understand this change in the ground, she felt about: great heavens! it was the head of a corpse she grasped. "My God!" she cried in terror, "this must be, as I was told, the cemetery where these executioners throw their victims; they scarcely even trouble to cover them with earth. This skull may be that of my dear Omphale, or that of the unfortunate Octavie, so beautiful... so gentle... so good... who appeared on earth only like the roses her charms resembled. And I myself—alas!—in a fortnight this would have been my place, I cannot doubt it, I have just heard it... What shall I gain by seeking out new misfortunes? Have I not suffered enough? Have I not already been the cause of too many crimes? Ah! let me fulfill my destiny... refuge of my friends, open to receive me! When one is as forsaken, as poor, as abandoned as I am, must one struggle

so hard merely to linger a little longer among monsters? But no—I must avenge virtue in chains; it expects it from my courage; let us not give way; let us press on; it is essential that the world be rid of villains as dangerous as these. Should I fear the loss of six men, in order to save the thousands their ferocity sacrifices?” She pierced the next hedge; it was thicker than the first: the farther she went, the closer they seemed. Yet the breach was made; but beyond it the ground was firm again, and our heroine reached the edge of the ditch without having found the wall of which Omphale had spoken; there was surely none—it is likely the monks had invented it only to inspire greater fear.

Less confined beyond this sixfold enclosure, Justine could distinguish objects more clearly: the church and the adjoining buildings immediately came into view, both bordered by the ditch; she took care not to attempt crossing it on that side, but followed its edge until, finding herself opposite one of the forest paths, she resolved to cross there and make for the road once she had climbed the embankment. The ditch was very deep but dry; as it was lined with brick, there was no way to lower herself gently, so she threw herself down; stunned by the fall, she lay for a few moments before rising, then pressed on and reached the opposite side without difficulty—but how to climb it? After searching, she found a spot where a few loosened bricks allowed her both to use the others as steps and to wedge the tip of her foot into the earth for support; she was almost at the top when everything gave way beneath her and she fell back into the ditch, buried under the debris her fall brought down, believing herself dead. This second fall, involuntary, was harsher than the first; the materials that followed had even wounded her in several places—she was completely battered. “O God!” she cried in despair, “let us go no farther; let us remain here; what has happened to me is a warning from heaven... it does not wish me to continue; my ideas must deceive me: evil is useful upon the earth, and when God wills it, it must be wrong to oppose it.” But the wise and virtuous Justine, soon revolting against a system born



of the corruption that had surrounded her, courageously freed herself from the rubble; finding it easier to climb again by the breach she had just made, thanks to the new footholds formed there, she tried once more and, in an instant, reached the top. All this had carried her away from the path she had seen, but, catching sight of it again, she gained it and fled at full speed; before the end of the day she was out of the forest, and soon upon that hill from which she had once glimpsed the infamous house she now left with such relief; there she rested, drenched with sweat, and her first act was to fall to her knees to offer thanks to God and to beg new forgiveness for the involuntary faults she had committed in that odious abode of crime and infamy. Bitter tears at once flowed from her eyes. "Alas!" she said to herself, "I was far less guilty when I followed this same road last year, guided by a devotion so cruelly misled. O God! in what state do I now behold myself!"

These dismal reflections, somewhat calmed by the pleasure of finding herself free, Justine continued on her way toward Dijon, imagining that it could only be in that city that her grievances would be usefully and legitimately heard.

She was on her second day's journey; perfectly calm about any fear of being pursued, yet with her mind still filled with all the horrors of which she had just been both witness and victim. It was hot, and, following her usual frugal habits, she had left the road in search of some shelter where she might take a light meal and wait for evening. A small clump of trees to the right of the path, through which a clear stream ran, seemed well suited to refresh her; having quenched her thirst with the cool water and eaten a little bread, she leaned her back against a tree and let the pure, serene air circulate through her veins, soothing and restoring her senses. There, reflecting on that almost unparalleled fate which, despite all the thorns that beset her in the path of virtue, always brought her back—whatever might happen—to the worship of that divinity and to acts of love and resignation toward

the Supreme Being whose image it is, a kind of enthusiasm suddenly seized her soul. "Alas!" she said to herself, "this good God whom I adore has not abandoned me, since even now I have regained my strength! Is it not to Him that I owe this favour? And are there not beings on earth to whom it is denied? I am not wholly unhappy, then, since there are still those more to be pitied than I... Am I not far less so than the unfortunate creatures I have left in that den of vice, from which God's goodness has delivered me as if by a miracle?" And full of gratitude, she had fallen to her knees to give thanks to the Supreme Being, when she noticed that her action had drawn the attention of a tall, beautiful woman, neatly dressed, who was traveling the same road. "My child," said this woman with affected tenderness, "you seem deeply preoccupied. It is easy to read in your face that some great sorrow weighs upon you... I too, my dear little one, am unhappy! Trust me with your griefs, and I will share mine with you; we shall console one another, and perhaps from this mutual confidence will arise that sweet sentiment of friendship, by means of which the most unfortunate learn to endure their sufferings by sharing them like sisters. You are young and pretty, my dear child—that alone is more than enough to encounter many thorns along the path of life; men are so wicked that one need only possess what may attract them to provoke, by that very fact, all their perfidy against us."

The souls of the unhappy readily open to offered consolations. Justine looked at the woman who questioned her; finding in her a very handsome face, no more than thirty-six years of age, wit, and a respectable bearing, she took her hand, burst into tears, and said, "Oh, my dear lady—" — "Come, my angel," replied Madame d'Esterval at once, with warmth, "let us go into that inn; I know it, we shall be quiet there. There you shall tell me your misfortunes, and I will tell you mine; and perhaps the result of this gentle confidence will make us less unhappy."

Justine allowed herself to be persuaded. They entered the inn; Madame d'Esterval did the honours: an excellent dinner was at

once served in a private room, and the conversation grew more intimate.

“My dear child,” said our new adventuress, after seeming to shed a few tears over her companion’s misfortunes, “mine are perhaps less numerous than yours, but they are more constant and, I dare say, more bitter. Sacrificed from my childhood to a husband I detest, I have for twenty years had before my eyes the man in the world I most abhor, and since that unhappy time I have been cruelly deprived of the only being who might have made my life happy. Along the borders of Franche-Comté and Burgundy there stretches a vast forest, in the depths of which my husband keeps an inn, conveniently placed for those who cross that little-known road; but, great heaven, must I confess it to you, my dear? this wretch, abusing the isolation of that obscure retreat, robs, plunders, and murders all who have the misfortune to stop there.” — “You make me shudder, madam; good God! this monster kills?” — “Dear girl, have pity on my shame and my misfortunes; I should myself be slaughtered if I betrayed his conduct; besides, can I attempt to complain? I dishonor myself by wishing to stain my husband. Oh, Justine, I am the most unhappy of women; my only consolation is to bind, if I can, some honest creature like you to my wretched fate, by means of whom I might perhaps snatch the greater number of his victims from his fury; how necessary such a woman would be to me! she would be the sweetness of my life, the safeguard of my conscience, my support, my resource in the dreadful state in which I live... Charming child, if I could inspire you with enough pity... enough confidence to induce you to share my lot... Ah! you would be far more my friend than my servant; it would not be wages I should offer you, but half of what I possess... Well then, Justine, do you feel the courage to accept what I propose? Does the certainty of contributing to such good deeds inflame your noble sentiments of virtue? and may I at last hope to have found a friend?” A glass of champagne was drunk on either side before Justine replied, and that enchanting liquor, whose singular

property is to stir at once in man both his vices and his virtues, soon prompted the virtuous Justine not to abandon to misery a woman so engaging as the one fortune had placed before her. "Yes, madam," she said to her new friend, "yes, rely upon it, I will follow you everywhere: these are opportunities for virtue that you offer me; what thanks do I not owe the Eternal for placing me in a position to exercise with you that active faculty of my heart! Who knows whether, through good counsel, patience, and excellent example, we may not succeed in reforming your husband? The prayers we shall address to heaven will be so ardent! Ah, let us hope one day to succeed!" And Madame d'Esterval, at these words, perceiving a crucifix, threw herself with devout fervor at the feet of the image: "God of the Christians," she cried in tears, "how many thanks I owe you for such a meeting; preserve to me this friend for a long time, and reward her for her zeal!"

They left the table; Madame d'Esterval generously paid the entire bill, and the two women set off on their way.

There were about fifteen leagues from the inn they had left to that of d'Esterval, six of which had to be covered through the thickest part of the forest. Nothing could be more peaceful than their journey, nothing more engaging, tender, or virtuous than all that was said along the way; nothing more agreeable than the plans they formed together. At last, they arrived.

In describing the situation of the inn kept by d'Esterval, his dear wife had only sketched it; one could hardly imagine a more savage retreat. Buried deep in the hollow of a ravine bristling with tall timber, one would not suspect the existence of the house until the moment of entering it. Two monstrous mastiffs guarded the door, and it was d'Esterval himself, at the head of two stout servant girls, who came to receive his wife and Justine. "Who is this creature?" said the surly innkeeper, eyeing his wife's companion. "Just what we need, my friend," replied Madame d'Esterval in a tone that began to open the eyes of our unfortunate traveller and made her understand that there was far more

understanding between husband and wife than had at first appeared; “do you not find her pretty?” — “Yes, by God, I do; and will she serve?” — “Once she is under your roof, are you not master?” And Justine, trembling, was led with her guide into a low room, where the host, after conferring in a low voice with his wife, returned to address our heroine roughly as follows: “Of all the adventures that may have befallen you in your life, my dear child, this one will no doubt seem the strangest. Duped by your foolish enthusiasm for virtue, you have, as my wife tells me, fallen into many traps where you were held by force; here you will be held by opinion alone. There, you were the object of many crimes without taking part in any; here you will share them all and be unable to avoid it; you will cooperate freely, you will be obliged to take part, and without constraint other than moral bonds and your own virtues.” “Sir! sir!” cried the good Justine, “are you then a sorcerer?” — “No,” replied d’Esterval, “I am only a villain—no doubt a singular one, but whose inclinations and crimes differ little from those of many who, like me, pursue the path of vice by means similar in substance, though different in form. I am a villain from libertinism; rich enough not to need this trade, I practice it only for the sake of my passions; they are so violently inflamed by it that I am stirred only by acts of theft and murder; they alone excite me. No other preliminaries would produce in me the condition necessary for enjoyment: no sooner have I committed one or the other of these crimes than my blood boils, my vigour rises, and I must have women. Mine not sufficing, I substitute servants or the young and pretty creatures chance brings us. If none arrive, Madame d’Esterval goes out to find them... She is an excellent creature, Justine, that woman; endowed with the same tastes and fancies as I, she aids my operations, and we share in their fruits in turn.” — “What!” said Justine, with astonishment and grief, “Madame d’Esterval has deceived me?” — “Certainly, if she appeared virtuous; for one could scarcely find a woman more corrupt; but it

was necessary to seduce you—fraud and imposture were required. You will therefore serve here the pleasures of my wife and myself, and—ah! here, my angel, is what will make you tremble—you shall be the Circe of the travellers who pass this way; you will entice them, bind them, serve them, flatter all their passions so as to ensure their downfall... that we may more easily slaughter them afterward.” — “And you imagined, sir, that I would remain in this infernal house?” — “I have done more, Justine: I have told you that once you are informed, it will be difficult for you to flee, and that you will remain here of your own accord... because it will be impossible for you not to wish to remain.” — “Explain yourself, sir, I beg you.” — “I will: listen to me, and attend closely...” But at that moment a great noise was heard in the courtyard, and d’Esterval was obliged to break off to go and receive two merchants on horseback, followed by as many richly laden mules, who, on their way to the fair at Dole, had come to lodge in that cutthroat place.

The travellers, warmly received, were at once served, refreshed, and helped out of their boots; and d’Esterval, seeing them waiting for their supper in perfect ease, returned to finish Justine’s instruction.

“It is not necessary to tell you, my dear child,” resumed the extraordinary man, “that, with the tastes I have just confessed, I must possess other singularities of mind; and here are those that give a remarkable savour to my passions. I want the travellers who perish by my hand to be forewarned of my designs; I take pleasure in knowing them convinced that they are in the house of a villain; I want them to put themselves on their guard; in a word, I intend to overcome them by force. That circumstance excites me; it is what inflames my senses, what, in short, arouses me when I leave them, to the point that a body to satisfy me—of whatever age or sex—becomes absolutely necessary: such is, my angel, the role I assign you. It is you who will, in perfect good faith, do the impossible to help the victims escape, or to

urge them to defend themselves. I will tell you more: your freedom depends on it; if you enable even one to escape, you may flee with that person, and I promise I will not pursue you; but if the victim succumbs, you will remain—and, as you are virtuous, I am not wrong, you see, in saying you will remain of your own accord; for the hope of saving one of these unfortunate people from my fury will hold you fast forever. If you were to escape from me, certain that I continue this trade, you would carry with you the mortal regret of not having tried to save those who will perish after your departure; you would never forgive yourself for having missed the opportunity for such a noble act; and, as I tell you, the hope of succeeding one day will bind you to me for life. Will you say all this is useless, and that without so many precautions you would slip away at the first chance to denounce me? How clumsy I should be, my dear, if I had no answer to that objection—if I did not destroy it at a word. Listen to me, Justine: there is not a day I do not kill; you would count six victims before you reached the nearest tribunal; that is six lives lost while you attempted to have me arrested; six victims sacrificed to the most foolish hope. — I, the cause of their death? — Yes; for you might have saved one of them by warning him, and by saving one, you would save the rest. Well then, Justine, am I wrong to say I shall bind you by opinion? Flee, if you dare... go on, flee—every door stands open. — “Oh, sir,” said Justine, overwhelmed, “into what a position your wickedness places me!” — “I know it well—it is dreadful! and from it arises one of the most powerful stimulants of my detestable passions. I delight in making you share in evil without your being able to prevent it; I delight in binding you, through virtue itself, to crime and infamy; and when I take you, Justine—for you understand well that it will come to that—this delicious idea will be among those that give me the keenest pleasure.” — “How, sir, must I submit?” — To everything, Justine—absolutely to everything. If you are clever enough to save the victim, all is well, since you escape with him; but if he perishes, your hands will be stained with his blood; you

will rob him, you will kill him, you will strip him with me; and then, stretched upon his bloody corpse, I shall take you there, naked. How many motives you will have, then, to save them! What skill, what ingenuity your virtues and your interests will compel you to employ to snatch them from my knife! O Justine! never will those sublime virtues you profess have shone in a finer light; never will a more splendid opportunity have been offered to prove yourself worthy of the esteem and admiration of honest men.”

It is very difficult to convey the state in which our heroine found herself when, after leaving her to attend to the affairs of his house, d’Esterval abandoned her for a moment to the full horror of her reflections.

“O great God!” she cried, “I believed that wickedness had exhausted upon me all its inventions, and that after all my fate has made me endure in this kind, nothing new could remain for it to make me feel... I was mistaken... here are refinements without example, here are turns of cruelty which, I would wager, are unknown even in the depths of hell: that execrable man is right—if I were to flee at once to have him seized, I would surely not succeed on the first day, and already this very evening I might be able to snatch from death the two travellers who have just arrived. But,” she continued, “if in a year or two I see that it becomes impossible for me ever to save the victims, would it not be better then to go and denounce this villain?... Ah! never, never—he has said it, he would escape as soon as he saw me free... he would slaughter, in his flight, all who happened at that moment to be strangers in his house, and they might be precisely those whose lives I could have saved... The monster... he is right—it is by opinion that he binds me; I would soon be gone if I had less virtue, and it is through virtue itself that I shall become criminal. Supreme Being, can you permit that good should give rise to so much evil? Is it just that virtue should lead to such misfortunes? What discouragement the story of my life will bring into every heart, if ever it is made known! O you who



may one day learn it, do not reveal it, I beg you—you would cast despair into the hearts of all who cherish goodness, and you would inevitably invite crime by displaying its triumphs.”

Justine was shedding bitter tears as she gave herself over to these painful thoughts, when Madame d’Esterval suddenly came to interrupt them. “Oh, madam,” she said on seeing her, “how cruelly you have deceived me!” “My dear angel,” replied that wretched woman, trying to caress her, “it was necessary in order to win you. But console yourself, Justine—you will soon grow accustomed to everything; I am quite persuaded that in a few months the very idea of leaving us will no longer occur to you... Come, kiss me, my pretty one; you are extremely beautiful, and I have the greatest desire to see you matched with my husband.” — “What, madam! you approve such horrors?” — “There is nothing improper in sharing one’s husband’s tastes; besides, he returns the favor—never was there a closer union; we anticipate one another in all that pleases us, and as we have the same tastes... the same means, we satisfy one another perfectly.” — “How, madam—robbery, murder?” — “Are my sweetest amusements, my dear; nothing inflames my passions like such episodes, and you shall see with what intensity we enjoy ourselves when we taste them drunk with blood.” — “And these servants here, madam, are they also charged with warning the travelers?” — “That honorable duty is reserved for you alone; knowing your admirable principles, we wished to put them into action. The girls you speak of are our accomplices, raised in crime, cherishing it almost as much as we do; they are far from wishing to help the victims escape. You will sometimes see my husband make use of them, but without intimacy; you alone shall be our confidante, you alone the friend of the house; these creatures will serve you as they serve us, and it is at our table, not theirs, that you will always dine.” — “Oh, madam, who could have believed that a person who appeared as respectable as you could give herself over to such atrocities?” — “Do not use such expressions,” said Madame d’Esterval, laughing lightly; “there is nothing but the

most natural simplicity in what we do; one never departs from nature when one follows one's inclinations, and I assure you that it is from her alone that my husband and I have received all those to which we abandon ourselves."

"Come, Justine, to work," said d'Esterval, hurrying in at once; "our merchants are at supper—go to them, speak with them, warn them, try to save them, and above all yield yourself if they desire you; do not forget that it is the surest way to inspire their confidence."

While Justine carries out her task in the manner we shall soon describe, let us inform our readers of the horrible customs of this house and of the persons our heroine finds there.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### Continuation and conclusion of the adventures at the inn. — Recognition. — Departure.

Madame d'Esterval, with whom it is proper to begin, was, as we have already said, a tall and beautiful woman of about thirty-six, extremely dark, with eyes of astonishing brilliance, a fine and well-shaped figure, hair of the deepest black, very hairy like a man, little bosom, small but well-formed buttocks, a dry and purplish sex, an unusually developed clitoris, perfectly shaped legs, great imagination and liveliness, talents and education, exceedingly depraved, and given to same-sex practices to the highest degree. Born in Paris of a distinguished family, chance had brought her into acquaintance with d'Esterval, himself very wealthy and well-born; finding in this woman a remarkable conformity of tastes and inclinations, he had hastened to make her his wife. Once married, they withdrew to this rustic retreat, where everything seemed to promise them the longest impunity for their crimes.

D'Esterval, older than his wife, was a very handsome man of forty-five, strongly built, of violent passions, with a body of iron and a remarkable constitution, and marked by peculiarities in his pleasures of which we shall speak when we see him in action. Wealthy enough to have no need of keeping an inn, he and his fiery wife practiced that trade only because it favoured their detestable inclinations: a splendid estate in Poitou awaited them should fortune ever cease to shield their excesses.

There were no other servants in the house than the two girls already mentioned; there since childhood, knowing no other place, never leaving, living in abundance and sharing in the favors of both master and mistress, there was no fear they would ever think of escaping. Madame d'Esterval alone handled provisions, going once a week to town to procure what the farm could not supply; and the most perfect harmony reigned in this household, corrupt though it was. It is thus false to say that only virtuous unions can endure: what breaks bonds is difference of habits and opinions; but where all is in accord, where nothing opposes the inclinations of those who live together, happiness may be found in vice as in virtue. No jealousy troubled this union; each encouraged the other's excesses, and each found heightened pleasure in the other's indulgence.

Meanwhile, Justine, in the chamber of the two merchants, attended to them with every care, without daring to reveal the truth; her sensitive and delicate soul could not decide between the dreadful duty of delivering her host to justice and that of allowing innocent men to be murdered. D'Esterval, however, who delighted in surprising his guests in pleasure and leading them from the arms of love to those of death, watched closely, impatient to see Justine inflame them; and when one of the travellers suddenly seized her and began to force himself upon her, she cried out in alarm, warning them of the danger. The men, startled, demanded an explanation; she urged them to arm themselves, revealing that they were in a murderous trap. They prepared to defend themselves—but in vain. A terrible noise was heard; d'Esterval rushed in, followed by the others, dragging Justine with them into an underground passage, where, to her horror, she saw the travellers thrown down by a violent fall, disarmed and helpless.

Here the intelligence of our readers will easily allow them to infer, without our stating it, that everything had been arranged by means of a trapdoor, and that the weapons, left upon a table

which had not moved, could not have followed the two unfortunate men in their fall. "My friends," said d'Esterval, placing a pistol at the throat of each, "you were warned, and yet by what chance were you not on your guard? Listen, lads—there is a way to get you out of this; do not despair. You see these two women: this one is mine—she is still beautiful; and as for the other, you have already tasted her—she is fit for a king. Well then, take them both before my eyes, and your lives are spared; but you are lost if you resist... if you do not set to work at once." And there, without giving them time to reply, the vile d'Esterval, whose passions were inflamed by these horrors, as we have already said, turns the pistols away, unbuttons their breeches, and sucks their cocks.

It is hard to move from fear to pleasure; but what efforts is nature not capable of when it comes to self-preservation! Dorothée goes about it with such skill; she knows so well how to calm and caress these two unfortunate men at the same time that they give in... and there they are, both with their cocks in the air: there is a sofa there; one of the two merchants takes the inn-keeper's wife there; she is fucked. Justine puts up a bit more of a fight; and, were it not for d'Esterval's threats, it is highly doubtful that the companion of Dorothée's fucker would have achieved any success; but, overcome by force, one must obey. The two couples are at it. Here the maids appear naked; they are armed with rods: pulling down the trousers of the two men, they expose their buttocks to d'Esterval's gaze; they whip these buttocks, which tremble with pleasure; the examiner handles them, he also fondles those of the maids, he slaps those of the women; more fickle than a butterfly, he flits indifferently among all the charms offered to his lust; his rebellious cock presents itself to the men's arses; the lecher thrusts into them; he runs his cock along them; then returns to those of the women, which he soon leaves for those of the maids. "Come on," he says to his wife, whilst sodomising Justine's fucker, "watch out for yours; I won't miss mine." The maids whip him during this time. The two

blows strike at once; at the very same moment, the two travellers are killed... The wretches die as they ejaculate; that is what their executioners wanted. Justine's face and breast are drenched in the blood and brains of the man who was ejaculating in her arms... of the man whom d'Esterval was sodomising, who himself had ejaculated whilst sodomising his victim. "Oh! Good heavens, you wretched devil," said the scoundrel as he came, "woe betide anyone who does not know the pleasure with which I have just defiled myself; there is not a single one in the world that is more thrilling and more delightful." — "O monster!" cried Justine, throwing off the corpse that weighed upon her, "I thought I had exhausted every kind of crime; but I had no inkling of yours; applaud yourself, you vile man, and be certain that you have surpassed in atrocity everything I have seen up to this moment." But the hardened cannibal laughed. "What on earth are you doing?" he said to his wife. "I'm still coming," she replied; "get that wretch off my body; for, dead as he is, the rascal's still hard, and I'd keep coming for ten years if he stayed there for ten years." — "Oh! Sir," cried Justine, "let us leave this place of horror." — "Eh! No, no, this is where I like to fuck. These bloody victims of my wickedness arouse my lust; I never get such a hard-on as when I look at them... There are four of you women here; lie down in pairs on each of these corpses: these are the beds of rest on which I am going to fuck all four of you." The rascal carries out his plan; cunt, arse, everything is fucked by him; he pushes the horror and abomination to the point of fucking the victims' arses again; he cums three or four times. They went back upstairs.

The burial of the bodies was left to the servants. D'Esterval and his wife occupied themselves with securing the valuables and throwing the mounts into a large pit near the house, intended to receive all those belonging to the unfortunate travellers who came to perish in that dreadful inn.

"Oh, sir," said Justine once calm had been restored somewhat, "if you want me to succeed in saving your victims; if you want

me at least to attempt it, tell me how your traps work; how can I possibly counter them otherwise?" — "That is something you shall never know, my child," said d'Esterval; "go and look in the strangers' room, and you shall see if everything is not in the same order. I am a magician, my daughter; nothing can either disrupt or guess my traps; keep trying; virtue, religion, honour—all command you to do so; but I very much fear you shall never succeed." They went to bed. As both husband and wife had each expressed a desire to spend the rest of the night with Justine, it was decided that, to keep everyone happy, she would sleep with both of them in the house's large bed. The object of caresses from both, the obedient Justine was forced to present her front to the lady and her buttocks to the gentleman at the same time. By turns being jerked off, fucked, caressed or beaten, the unfortunate girl was able to convince herself there that all she had done at the convent of Sainte-Marie was but a prelude to the lewd scenes she still had to perform with these new models of lust and wickedness. The cruel Dorothée, fierce in her tastes, wanted to whip Justine; her husband held her fast; and the poor child was flogged as she had never been in her life. This wicked couple took pleasure in making her run naked, in the dark, from one end of the house to the other, terrifying her with the sight of the corpses she had just seen die: both would hide, to frighten her even more; and, when she passed near the corners where they were waiting for her, she was met with enormous slaps, or dreadful kicks in the backside. The husband would then throw her into the middle of the room and sodomise her on the floor, whilst the wife masturbated to the sound of this nocturnal scene; at other times he would place her between them; one would suck her mouth, the other her cunt, and thus wear her out for two hours. Justine finally gets up, worn out, exasperated, utterly exhausted, but restored by an excellent breakfast... by fairly decent means, whenever it did not involve debauchery; reassured by the certainty that she would not voluntarily take part in any of these horrors, and by the hope of being fortunate enough to

prevent them all one day, the poor girl calmed down and settled into the routine of the house.

Two days passed without a single traveller appearing. Justine left no stone unturned during that time to unravel the incredible trick by which Esterval was thus hurling those unfortunate souls from their room into a cellar. The idea of a trapdoor did cross her mind; but however hard she looked, nothing could convince her that her suspicions were well-founded. Besides, even if it were a trapdoor, how could she possibly prevent it? By telling the traveller to avoid this or that spot? But might there not be several trapdoors? The very floor of the room might well form a trapdoor, and the unfortunate, devoted victims were never shown into other rooms: in this cruel dilemma, it even seemed to her almost pointless to warn the people. She shared this thought with Madame d'Esterval, who assured her that she was mistaken, and that certainly, if she were entrusted with such a task, she would well find the secret to making it succeed. — "Oh! Madame, do tell me your method." — "That would spoil my enjoyment... it would deprive me of my greatest pleasure." — "Do such horrors amuse you?" — It is delightful to deceive a man... to see him breathe his last in one's arms... it is divine to take his life at the very moment he savours supreme pleasure: this battle between the Fates and Venus stirs the mind astonishingly, and I assure you that if you were to try it, you would grow accustomed to it very quickly." — "Oh! Madam, what depravity!" — "But depravity is the seasoning of pleasure; there is no pleasure that is truly vivid without it. What would voluptuousness be without excess?" — "Ah! Can one take them that far! — Pity me... pity me, my dear, for not being able to push them further. If you only knew where my imagination wanders when I am in pleasure! What it conceives, what it invents! Be quite certain, Justine, that everything you see me do is far below what I would wish. Why must my desires be confined to this forest? If only I were the queen of the world! If only I could extend these fiery desires to all of nature!... Every hour of my life would



be marked by a crime... every step I took by a murder. If I ever desired sovereign authority, it was to feast on crimes; I would have wished to surpass, through my atrocities, all the cruel women of antiquity; I would have wished that from one end of the universe to the other, men might have been terrified by my name and my crimes. Is not the very analysis of crime enough to establish its praise? What is a crime? It is the act which, by subjugating men, unfailingly elevates us above them; it is the act which makes us masters of the lives and fortunes of others, and which, by so doing, adds to the portion of happiness we enjoy that of the being sacrificed. Will one tell me that, as soon as it is at the expense of others, this usurped happiness cannot be perfect? Fools!... and it is precisely because it is usurped that it is such; it would have no charm if it were given; it must be snatched away, wrested from them; it must cost tears to the one from whom it is taken; and it is from the certainty of this pain inflicted upon others that the sweetest pleasures arise.” — But, madam, there is wickedness in that.” — “Not at all; there is only the very simple and very natural desire to draw to oneself the greatest possible measure of happiness imaginable, — I agree, provided it is not at the expense of others. — But I shall not enjoy it fully if I believe others to be as fortunate as I; for the perfection of my happiness, I must be able to believe myself the only happy person in the world. ... happy whilst everyone else suffers; there is no being of a delicate nature who does not feel how sweet it is to be privileged. As long as I have only one share of the general happiness, I am just like everyone else; if, on the contrary, I can gather them all to myself, it becomes undeniable that I am happier than the others. If, I suppose, there are ten portions of happiness in a society of ten people, they are all equal, and consequently none of them can flatter itself that it is more fortunate than the others; if, on the contrary, one of the individuals in that society manages to deprive the other nine of their portions of happiness in order to gather them all to himself, he will certainly be truly happy; for he will then be able to make

comparisons that were previously impossible for him to conceive. Happiness does not lie in this or that state of mind; it consists solely in comparing one's own state to that of others; and what comparison is there left to make when everyone is like us? If everyone possessed equal fortune, would there be a single person who would dare to call themselves rich?" — "Oh! madam, I shall never understand this way of being happy; it seems to me that I could only be happy myself if I knew that everyone else were happy." — "Because you are of a weak constitution; because you have only small desires... only feeble passions... only slight pleasures. But this mediocrity of opinion is not acceptable in a being organised as I am; and if my happiness can exist only in the misfortune of others, it is because I find in that misfortune the sole stimulus that strongly pricks my nerves, and which, by the violence of that shock, more certainly directs the electrical atoms circulating in their cavities towards pleasure."<sup>8</sup> Generally

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<sup>8</sup> We shall soon develop this system; in the meantime, let us give an analysis of the nerve. The nerve is that part of the human body which resembles a white cord, sometimes round, sometimes flat. It ordinarily takes its origin in the brain, from which it emerges in bundles symmetrically arranged in pairs: there is no part of the human body more interesting than the nerve. It is a kind of phenomenon, says La Martinière, all the more admirable in that it seems less susceptible of action. It is upon the nerves that life and the whole harmony of the organism depend; from them arise the senses and pleasures, knowledge and ideas; in a word, they are the seat of all organization; it is there that the seat of the soul is found—that is to say, of that principle of life which is extinguished with animals, which grows and diminishes with them, and is therefore entirely material. The nerves are regarded as channels destined to convey the spirits to the organs to which they are distributed, and to carry back to the brain the impressions of external objects upon those organs. A strong inflammation violently agitates the animal spirits that flow within these nerves and disposes them to pleasure, if that inflammation is produced in the organs of generation or in those adjacent to them: this explains the pleasures derived from blows, pricks, pinches, or whipping. From the extreme influence of the moral upon the physical likewise arises the painful or agreeable shock of these animal spirits, according to the

speaking, all such errors on the part of men stem from the false definition they give of happiness. What is called by this name is not a state of affairs that can equally suit all men; this state is always different depending on the individuals upon whom it acts, and this influence is always relative to their constitution. This is so true that the riches and pleasures which seem to constitute universal happiness often find souls impervious to their allure; and that the pains, melancholy, adversity and sorrows which seem bound to displease everyone nevertheless find their advocates. Once this hypothesis is accepted, there will be no further argument left for anyone wishing to dispute the singularity of tastes, and the course of silence, if it is reasonable, becomes the only one they have to take. Louis XI found his happiness in the tears he caused the French to shed, just as Titus did in the favours with which he overwhelmed the Romans. On what grounds do you now wish to compel me to prefer one to the other? Were they not both right? And were they not both just? — Just? Certainly not; there is no justice except in doing good. — And what, pray, do you call good? Prove to me that there is more good in giving a hundred louis to a man than in snatching them from him? By what right am I obliged to make others happy? And how (prejudice aside) can you convince me that I behave better by doing so than by not doing so? Any principle of universal morality is a mere chimera; there is no true morality save relative morality; and that has effects only upon us. Crimes delight me, I embrace them; I abhor virtue, I shun it; I might perhaps love it, if I had derived some pleasure from it. Oh! Justine, follow my example and become corrupt; the goddess you serve is ungrateful; she will never compensate you for the sacrifices she demands, and you will have served her all your life, without merit and without reward. — But if what you do were

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moral sensation received; whence it follows that, with principles and philosophy, with the total annihilation of prejudices, one may enormously extend, as we have said elsewhere, the sphere of one's sensations. (*Author's note.*)

right, madam, would men punish it? — Men punish what harms them; they crush the snake that bites them, though one cannot infer from this the slightest argument against the existence of that reptile. Laws are selfish; we must be so; they serve society, but society's interests are not our own; and when we indulge our passions, we do individually what they do *en masse*; only the results differ."

Sometimes d'Esterval would join in these conversations: they would then take on a more imposing character. Immoral by principle and by temperament, an atheist by inclination and by philosophy, d'Esterval, fighting against all prejudices, left the unfortunate Justine with no means of defending herself. When she happened to reproach him for his daily murders, "My child," he would say to her, "movement is the essence of the world; yet there can be no movement without destruction; therefore destruction is necessary to the laws of nature; therefore he who destroys the most, being the one who imposes the most movement upon matter, is at the same time the one who best serves the laws of nature. This mother of all mankind has granted them all an equal right to all things. It is permitted, in the natural order, for everyone to do whatever they please against anyone, and everyone may possess, use and enjoy indiscriminately whatever they deem good. Utility is the rule of law. It suffices for a man to desire a thing to establish its necessity to him, and, from the moment that this thing is necessary to him, or simply pleasing, it is just. The only punishment we ought to receive for having committed this act consists in the permission another has to commit it equally against us. 'The justice or injustice of an action,' says Hobbes, 'depends solely on the judgement of the one who has committed it, which will absolve him of blame and justify his conduct.' The sole cause of all our errors stems from the fact that we always take for the laws of nature that which arises merely from the customs or prejudices of civilisation. Nothing in the world offends nature; civilisation, more irascible, is offended al-

most at every moment; but what do the injuries it receives matter? To offend the laws of men is to insult a phantom. Did those who worked to establish this civilisation have my consent, and can I adhere to laws that repulse my conscience and my reason?" Justine then extolled to d'Esterval the excellence of our perceptions, and, relying on this shaky foundation, she sought falsely to use it to justify the acceptance of the religious system. "I agree," replied d'Esterval, "that our perceptions, our senses, being of a more delicate nature than those of animals, have led us to believe in the existence of God and the immortality of the soul; consequently we exclaim, as you do... What better proof of the truth of all these things than the necessity we feel to accept them? But that is precisely where the fallacy lies. It is quite true that the sort of constitution we have received from nature compels us to create chimeras, and very often to console ourselves with them; but the existence of a religious cult is no more demonstrated by that. Man would be the happiest of beings if the mere need he has for some illusion were to give rise to reality at once. Once again, our interest does not determine the reality of a thing; and even if it were more advantageous for us to deal with a being as favourable as his supporters describe him, that would in no way prove the existence of that being. It is a thousand times more agreeable for man to depend on blind nature than on a being whose good qualities, upheld solely by theologians, are at every turn contradicted by the facts. Nature, when properly studied, provides us with everything we need to make ourselves as happy as our existence allows. It is in nature that we find what is needed to satisfy our physical needs; it is in nature alone that lie all the laws of our happiness and our preservation: apart from nature, there are nothing but chimeras, which we must never cease to curse and detest throughout our lives."

But if Justine did not possess, in reply to so much philosophy, that strength of mind which characterized her hosts, she sometimes drew from her heart ideas to which they themselves found it difficult to respond. This was the case one day when d'Esterval

attacked her inclination toward benevolence, seeking to show her the falseness of that supposed virtue. "Ah! yes, yes, sir," she said with that pathetic eloquence of the heart, which often surpasses that of the mind, "yes, I know very well that one creates only ingrates by practicing kindness; but I would rather suffer from the injustice of men than from the reproaches of my own heart."<sup>9</sup>

Such were the conversations of this society, whose corruption and manners, as we see, had not yet succeeded in destroying in our heroine the excellent principles of her childhood, when some travellers arrived at the inn.

"Oh! as for these," said d'Esterval, "they will not bring us much money... but a very strong dose of pleasure—I feel it in the stirring of my heart." — "And who are these people?" asked Dorothee. — "An unfortunate family, composed of father, mother, and daughter. The first, still vigorous, may be of use to you, I hope... the mother... there... look at her through that window—no more than thirty, fair, well-formed; and as for the daughter... a beauty... thirteen... look, look at that enchanting face... oh, Dorothee! what a delight!"

"Sir," said the father, addressing the innkeeper respectfully, "I think it my duty, before entering, to inform you of our misfortune; it is such that it will be impossible for us to pay for our lodging, however modest it may be. We were not born to misfortune: my wife had some means, I brought some as well; dreadful circumstances have ruined us, and it is relying on the charity of innkeepers that we travel to a relative in Alsace who has promised us some assistance." — "Misfortune... d'Esterval," whispered Justine in the innkeeper's ear, "oh, d'Esterval, you will respect it, I am sure!" — "Justine," said the ferocious host, "take these people to the usual room; I will see to their supper." And Justine, her heart heavy with sighs—Justine, who easily understood from this order that their fate would be no better than that

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<sup>9</sup> The poor girl did not know that the injustice of men rules over us, and that one can do as one pleases with the human heart.

of the others—sadly led this poor family to the fatal lodging prepared for them.

“Unfortunate people,” she said to them as soon as she saw them settled there, “nothing can protect you from the villainy of those in whose hands you are; do not even try to leave—you could no longer do so now. But do not go to bed; break, cut, if you can, the bars of your window; lower yourselves into the courtyard and flee with the speed of lightning.” — “What?... what are you saying?... oh heavens!... poor creatures like us!... what have we, alas, that could arouse the fury or the greed of the people you speak of?... oh, it cannot be!” — “Nothing is more certain; make haste—within a quarter of an hour it will be too late.” — “And even if I tried,” said the father, going to the window, “even if I followed your advice, that courtyard into which we would descend—you see it yourself—it is surrounded by a wall; we would still be imprisoned... Well then, young lady, since you are kind enough to warn us... since our unhappy fate touches you, try to procure us weapons; that means, more honorable and more secure, will suffice, I am sure.” — “Weapons... do not count on it,” replied Justine; “there are none here that I can command. Try to escape—that is all I can advise you; if you do not succeed, remain on your bed without sleeping; that position may perhaps protect you from a trapdoor through which you are meant to fall... Farewell—ask me no more.”

No words can describe the anguish of this unfortunate father; as soon as Justine had left, he threw himself into his wife’s arms: “Oh, my dearest friend,” he cried, “how relentlessly misfortune pursues us!... But let us give thanks to heaven; this is the last... she will put an end to our woes”, and bitter tears flooded all three of them. As for d’Esterval, his eye fixed calmly on the crack in the partition, he watched with the composure of a villain, and pleased himself voluptuously at the sheer horror of the spectacle... “Very well,” he said to Justine, stopping her as soon as he saw her come out, “you’ve behaved well this time. Come and turn me on, my angel; come and put your lovely arse in my

hands; come and place it close to my cock... This scene is a unique one for me"; and he continued watching, until a moment of silence, following the outburst of grief, made d'Esterval fear some desperate resolve. "Let us withdraw," he said to Justine, "it is time to act." — "Oh, sir, they have not supped." — "They would not pay me for that supper; and besides, what need have they of strength for the peaceful and swift journey they are about to make?" — "What, sir! will you not spare such unfortunate people?" — "Spare them! I... I should be very sorry to miss such victims."

They went downstairs; Justine and d'Esterval found Dorothée, already worked up by the anticipation of the crime she was about to commit. But, as they did not wish our heroine to discover the mechanism of the trap, they locked her in a room, and one of the servants came to fetch her when the entire floor of the fatal chamber had dropped into the cellar. "You see, Justine," said d'Esterval, "it was useless for you to tell them to remain on their bed to escape the trap—they were on it; but here are the bed and the room."

Yet the three defenceless victims implored d'Esterval with their moans and tears; the weeping girl lay at the feet of those two ferocious spouses... nothing could move their hearts; it is this unfortunate girl whom d'Esterval sacrifices first; he deflowers her without mercy, exploring every path of pleasure indiscriminately; the mother is treated in the same way, and the father hopes for mercy if he agrees to have sex with Dorothée; Justine is forced to arouse the passions of this wretch. Through sheer artistry, she succeeds. It is quite rightly said that treasures are more often found in the trousers of a boor than in those of a tax collector. A monstrous cock immediately rises; Dorothée, all aflame, swallows it whole; d'Esterval, pressing the child against the loins of the man who is fucking his wife, takes pleasure in sodomising the girl on her father's back; Justine is ordered to wank the mother: this time, it is d'Esterval himself who must, in one fell swoop, take the lives of both father and daughter; the



moment of his release is the one he chooses, and whilst with his right hand the villain, with dagger thrusts, commits this double murder, his left, armed with a pistol, blows the mother's brains out as Justine continues to wank her. Our heroine cannot bear this compounding of horrors; she faints: such is the cruel moment when the savage d'Esterval seizes her; he sodomises her; his wife covers him with corpses, and the villain fires, tormenting his victim, to restore her, he says, to life.

"We shall have one trouble the less," said d'Esterval as he came out of the dungeon. — "And what is that?" said Dorothée. — "That of robbing these people." — "Who knows," replied one of the servants, "it is often to avoid paying that such rogues pretend to be poor..." But, alas, these had spoken only too truly; the most thorough search produced no more than a single coin. — "Abominable deed!" said Justine. "Admit," she added to her masters, "that this is what one calls a gratuitous crime." — "That is precisely when they are best," replied d'Esterval; "when one loves crime for its own sake, it needs no further motive."

The following week proved more fruitful; strangers arrived almost every day. Yet, whatever warnings Justine gave them, not a single one escaped; all alike fell prey to the greed and the lust of that infernal couple, until there came to the inn a person singular enough to attract, for a moment, the attention of those who care to read us.

It was about seven o'clock; the whole company was enjoying, on a bench near the door, the pure and serene air of a fine autumn evening, when a man on horseback, arriving at a gallop, anxiously asked whether he might find shelter in the house. "I was stopped about a league from here," he said with visible alarm; "my servant was killed, his horse stolen; I was fortunate enough to unhorse the man who seized my bridle, but not fortunate enough to avenge my servant; his murderer disappeared, and I fled." — "What imprudence!" said d'Esterval, "to cross so dangerous a forest with so small an escort." — "All the more so," replied the rider, "as I have people enough at my command to

be better accompanied; but I am going to visit an uncle I am very fond of, who has long invited me to share the pleasures of a fine estate he possesses in Franche-Comté, and, knowing his taste for solitude, I brought few attendants with me. In short, sir, can you lodge me?" — "Certainly," replied d'Esterval, "come in; my wife and I will do our best to receive you well." The rider dismounted and entered the room, and it was then that Justine, observing him more closely, uttered a cry of surprise as she recognized him. "O Bressac!" she exclaimed, "you here! I am lost..." — "Bressac!" said d'Esterval, "what, sir, you are the Marquis de Bressac, the owner of that fine estate near the Bondy forest?" — "The very same." — "Embrace me, sir; I have the honor of being closely related to you—recognize in me Sombreville, your mother's cousin." — "Ah, sir, this meeting... Alas! you know by what misfortune I lost that tender mother; but what you do not know, and what you will not leave unpunished," continued Bressac, pointing to Justine, "is that this girl is the murderer of that respectable woman. How can you keep such a monster in your house?" — "Oh, sir, do not believe him!" cried Justine in tears, "I am incapable of such a crime, and if I may be allowed to explain—" — "Silence, silence, Justine," said d'Esterval; "it is from this gentleman that I shall learn the truth, and from him that I shall take the impressions which will guide my conduct toward you. Leave us." Confused, Justine was forced to withdraw, and Bressac, as one may imagine, continued to accuse her to his kinsman. An hour later she was recalled, and, as usual, ordered to conduct the traveler to the fatal room; she obeyed, but, avoiding all explanation, returned immediately to her master. "Sir," she said eagerly, "how am I to behave toward Monsieur de Bressac? Since he is your relative, surely..." — "Justine," replied Sombreville—whom we shall continue to call d'Esterval—"it is surprising that, after the kindness and consideration my wife and I show you, you should have concealed a circumstance of your life that makes you appear so guilty in the eyes of ordinary men. Knowing our philosophy on such trifles,

you should, it seems to me, have shown more frankness.” — “Oh, sir,” replied Justine with that noble candor inspired by virtue, “I swear to you, I protest, I am innocent of the crime of which Monsieur de Bressac accuses me. He need not seek so far for his mother’s murderer—he knows only too well where he is.” — “What? explain yourself, Justine,” said Madame d’Esterval. — “He himself, madam—he himself committed that horror, and the villain accuses me of it.” — “Are you certain of what you say?” — “I cannot doubt it; I will reveal, when you wish, every detail of this crime.” — “I have no time to hear it now,” said d’Esterval; then, turning to his wife: “What do you decide, Dorothée?” — “With regret,” replied that monster, “I condemn to death a man as wicked as ourselves; but his appearance excites my desires too strongly—I insist he must perish.” — “I agree,” said d’Esterval; “Justine, no explanations with him—go and carry out your usual task; have no fear; even if you had committed the crime he charges you with, we would not esteem you any less—on the contrary, it would recommend you to us; do not blush to confess it.” — “Believe me, encouraged by such words I would confess all if I were guilty; but I am innocent of that crime, I repeat it to you.” — “Very well, then go up, my child, and act as usual—remember that I am following your steps.”

Nothing was more difficult here than the conduct our heroine was required to adopt; what satisfaction it would have been for her had vengeance been to her taste! We know well that, in fact, whether she warned him or not, the death of her accuser was inevitable; but who would believe it? From that very certainty, Justine drew new means, which we are about to see her employ, to save the life of the man who had so cruelly conspired against hers. She hastened, knowing she had time to speak a moment with the marquis before d’Esterval came to listen. “Sir,” she said to him in tears, “despite all that you have done to me, I come to save you, if I can; though he is your kinsman, the monster with whom you are has designs upon your life. Come down at once; do not remain a single minute in this room, where traps

surround you on every side. Come and try to calm his rage; above all, appease his wife—more relentless than her husband, she has decreed your death. Come down, sir, come down; keep your pistols about you—in two seconds it will be too late.”

Bressac, who in the depths of his soul could not help but feel a certain esteem for the one who spoke to him, and therefore placed great confidence in her words, sprang forward and encountered d’Esterval on the staircase. “Let us go down, sir,” he said firmly, “I must speak with you.” — “But, sir—” — “Down, I tell you,” and with these words he pushed him into the salon, closing the door behind them and forcing Justine back as she tried to follow. The exchange that followed must have been a lively one; we are not given its details, but the result was that Bressac, likely revealing himself frankly to his kinsman, persuaded him that villains ought not to harm one another; that Dorothee was appeased by the marquis’s attentions and seductions; and that it was agreed they should all go together to Bressac’s uncle. “This uncle,” said Bressac, “is a libertine by profession; he is also your relative, since we are cousins: let us go to him, I promise you the most delightful pleasures at his house.” These arrangements made, they all supped together; Justine was admitted. “Embrace me,” Bressac said to her, “come, I restore your honor in my kinsman’s eyes... My friend, since you are as much a villain as I, I do not hesitate to confess that I alone committed the crime of which I accused this girl; the poor creature is incapable of it. Let her come with us; my uncle has asked me to find him a maid; he wants a trustworthy girl to attend his wife. Given what is required, I think no one is more suitable than Justine; the position I offer her is a good one; by gaining my uncle’s confidence, she may at last realize that dream of happiness she has pursued for so long... Oh, Justine, accept this token of my gratitude, and let harmony, peace, and tranquility be restored among us. Do you agree to this arrangement, cousin, and will you give me Justine?” — “With all my heart,” replied d’Esterval; “I was beginning to tire of her, and the consequences of that

weariness might have been fatal for her.” — “I believe it,” said Bressac; “I am like you, my dear fellow—once an object has satisfied my desires, I would gladly send it to the devil.” — “Have you not enjoyed Justine?” said Dorothée. — “No, madam; I know only you in the world who could make me unfaithful to my tastes—I love only men.” — “My friend,” said d’Esterval eagerly, “my wife will serve you whenever you wish; she has the finest figure and the greatest inclination for such pleasures... and, besides, a particular attribute by which she can return to you whatever you please to give her.” — “Oh, by heaven, at once,” said Bressac; “I have never known how to postpone such a project,” and he was about to seize Dorothée, who, already intoxicated with wine and desire, encouraged him fully, when the barking of the dogs suggested that someone was about to knock at the door; it was indeed so: though it was already midnight, some strangers requested entry. They were officers of the mounted police who, having learned of the robbery committed against Bressac and the murder of his servant, and having followed the trail as far as possible, came to inquire whether anyone at the inn could enlighten them. Bressac himself appeared, recounted what had happened, and declared he did not know which way the robbers had gone; the officers were given drink and offered beds, which they declined; they departed, and as soon as they were gone, joy returned, and the most scandalous excesses occupied the remainder of the night.

Since the mingling of the sexes had proved unsuccessful, and Bressac’s efforts had led only to him sodomising Dorothée twice, the men were forced to amuse themselves together, and the women to do the same. Dorothée, burning with passion, wore Justine out, whilst d’Esterval exhausted Bressac, and they went to bed at daybreak, intending to set off all four as soon as they had had breakfast.

“The man to whom I am taking you,” said Bressac as they sat down to this meal, “is called the Count de Gernande.” — “Gernande! Why, I am certainly related to him,” said d’Esterval;

“he was your mother’s brother, and consequently my first cousin.” — “And do you know him?” — “I have never seen him in my life; I only know that he is a singular man... a man whose tastes...” — “Wait, wait,” said Bressac, “I shall describe him to you, since you do not know him.”

“The Count de Gernande is a man of fifty, very stout; nothing is more frightening than his appearance: the length of his nose, the heavy darkness of his brows, his black and wicked eyes, his large ill-formed mouth, his gloomy, bald forehead, the harsh and threatening tone of his voice, the enormity of his arms and hands—all contribute to make him a gigantic figure whose very presence inspires terror. You will soon see whether the character and actions of this satyr match his dreadful appearance; he has wit and knowledge, but no morals, no religion—one of the greatest villains that ever existed, and the most celebrated glutton you have heard of in your time. Nothing is more singular than the nature of his debaucheries; his wife is the primary object of his ferocity, but he mixes into this practices so libertine that I am convinced that within a week you will both thank me for having introduced you to him.” — “And it is to that woman, the unhappy victim of her husband’s fury, that you intend to send me, sir?” said Justine. — “Certainly; she is said to be very gentle... I do not know her myself... but it is said she is an honest and sensitive woman who needs someone like herself beside her—a gentle being to console her; it seems to me, Justine, that this suits your principles very well.” — “Be it so; but in consoling the wife, shall I not displease the husband? Shall I not, moreover, fall prey to the brutal passions of the villain you have just described?” — “And if that were so,” said Bressac, “what great misfortune would it be? Were you not in that house exposed to the same dangers?” — “Against my will.” — “Well then, at my uncle’s it will have to be willingly—that will be the only difference.” — “Oh, sir, I see your cruel wit has lost none of its sharpness; but since you know my character, you must see that I cannot submit to such things. Since d’Esterval is leaving his house and has no further need of

my service, how greatly obliged I would be to you both, gentlemen, if you would restore me a freedom which, in truth, you scarcely have the right to take from me.” — “As for the right, it is unquestionable,” said d’Esterval; “are we not the stronger, and do you know, Justine, a more sacred right than that?” — “I formally oppose that freedom,” said Bressac; “being expressly charged by my uncle to bring him a gentle and pretty girl for his wife, and finding none more suitable than Justine, she will, I hope, be flattered that I bind her irrevocably to Madame de Gernande’s service; she is exactly what is needed, and even if that close connection should at times expose her to the husband’s brutal passions, I beg her to accept that nothing prevents me from assigning her to the wife.”

Justine protested in vain; she had to obey. They set out. As far as the middle of the forest, the journey was made on horseback; a four-seated carriage was hired at the first town, and they arrived without incident at Monsieur de Gernande’s, whose superb château stood isolated in the middle of a large park surrounded by high walls, on the borders of Lyonnais and Franche-Comté. But this vast building was far from being as populated as it seemed designed to be: one saw a little activity only around the kitchens, situated in vaulted rooms beneath the central part of the house; all the rest was as solitary as the situation of the château itself.

When the party entered, Monsieur de Gernande was at the far end of a vast and magnificent apartment, wrapped in an Indian satin dressing gown, negligently draped over the ottoman on which he reclined. Near him were two young boys, so ridiculously dressed and coiffed with such art and elegance that one might have taken them for girls—both charming in appearance, no more than fifteen or sixteen—but in such a state of languor and exhaustion that one would have been tempted to think them ill.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> The cause of this desolation will soon be explained.

“My dear uncle,” said the Marquis de Bressac on entering, “here are two of my friends whom I have the honor of presenting to you, with all the more confidence as they both have the advantage of being related to you. Recognize in them Monsieur and Madame de Sombreville.” — “Ah! they are my cousins,” said Gernande, “I have never seen them; but since you bring them to me, they must surely be worthy of us; I am therefore very pleased to see them. And this young girl—who is she?” — “A trustworthy servant, my uncle, whom, in accordance with your wishes, I bring to Madame de Gernande, and whom I believe to possess all the qualities necessary for the post intended for her.” The count had Justine come closer, and, without asking leave of the company, lifted her garments and examined her from head to foot in the most abrupt and cavalier manner. “How old are you?” he asked. — “Twenty, sir.” — He followed this first question with several others concerning her person. Justine briefly recounted the most notable circumstances of her life, not omitting the stain attached to her, but skillfully disguising the horrors she had been forced to endure in the house of the relative presented to Gernande, and then described her misery. “You are unfortunate,” interrupted the brute, “so much the better... so much the better—you will be more pliant. It is a very slight inconvenience, is it not, gentlemen, that misfortune should pursue that abject race of the people whom nature condemns to crawl beside us upon the same soil? It makes them more active and less insolent; they fulfill their duties toward us all the better.” — “But, sir,” said Justine, “I have told you my birth; it is not abject.” — “Yes, yes, I know that sort of thing; one claims all manner of origins when one is in misery; pride must have its illusions to console the blows of fortune; it is for us, afterwards, to believe what we please of such births brought low by circumstance. All that is indifferent to me; I find you in the condition of a servant, and I shall take you as such if it suits you; nevertheless, it will depend upon you to be happy; patience, discretion, and in a few years I will send you away able to live without service. My friend,” he added,



turning to Bressac, “tell me now a little about the two agreeable relatives you bring me; we have spent enough time on this wench.”

“Monsieur and Madame de Sombreville, better known as d’Esterval,” said Bressac, “possess, my dear uncle, all the qualities that can make their acquaintance agreeable to you; their profound immorality will make you cherish them, I am sure; and when you learn that, despite their name and their wealth, they have abandoned everything that might have allowed them to live pleasantly in society, in order to bury themselves in the depths of a forest where the only pleasure they know is to rob and murder the travelers who come to seek hospitality in the house they keep in the midst of that dark retreat—when you learn all this, I flatter myself you will thank me for bringing you such precious friends.” — “They murder travelers?” said Gernande, bursting into laughter; “ah! that is delightful! I know all that—I understand it perfectly... it is astonishing what one can do with imagination! One kills, one robs, one plunders, one poisons, one burns—nothing is simpler than all that: one is aroused by it, and from that moment alone it becomes divine. I amused myself with all those follies once; my mind is still stirred by them; but as I grow older, I prefer pleasures that are calmer and more domestic. I perhaps do just as much—but at home, and I like it better so... Now then, and your charming relative’s wife—what is she like?” — “Just as vicious as he is, my dear uncle; I hope her cynicism and libertinage will amuse you. Believe me, our relative has too much wit to bind himself to a woman who did not share his vices.” — “It must be so,” said Gernande; “I confess that without that condition, I would not forgive him for visiting me in so conjugal a manner. Women, my dear nephew, have a great need to make amends for the faults of their sex. Pardon, madam,” he added, turning to Dorothée, “but I like women scarcely more than my nephew does, and if I keep one in my house, the way I make her the victim of my whims is enough to justify me in the eyes of those who think as I do...” Then, having

Dorothée approach him... “She is beautiful at least, your wife... extremely beautiful, my cousin... may I?” And the wretch, lifting her garments from behind, examined her for a moment. “There, upon my word, is a very fine figure,” he continued; “a little masculine, but I prefer it so. You have never had children, I hope?” — “No indeed, sir, I do not expose myself to such follies; but if, through some imprudence, such a misfortune were to happen to me, two or three glasses of savin<sup>11</sup> would soon rid me of it.” — “Ah, very good, very good, I see your wife is most agreeable; she will form, with mine, a delightful contrast; I am eager to bring them together. Do you wish, sir,” said d’Esterval, “that I leave you alone with her?” — “No,” replied the count, “we must not restrain ourselves among ourselves, and I hope that our pleasures will henceforth be as open as our thoughts.” — “Openly,” said Bressac, “that is the true charm of society.” — “And you, my cousin,” resumed Gernande, turning to d’Esterval, “you must be well endowed?” — “Like a mule,” said Bressac; “accustomed as I am to extremes, I assure you his is remarkable”; and Justine, at a sign from Bressac, came to assist, revealing to Gernande one of the most striking examples he had ever seen. “Ah! that is superb,” said Gernande, attempting to examine it more closely; “that is divine. Oh, my dear fellow, how eager I am to see you with my wife! Turn around, Bressac, let me observe more closely... yes, indeed... oh! what a constitution, my nephew! what a constitution! I have never seen the like. My friends,” he said to his two attendants, “let one of you assist Bressac; let the other attend to him—one must take proper care of a

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<sup>11</sup> Savin is recognized as one of the most powerful emmenagogues there is; it provokes the expulsion of the fetus and the afterbirth: a few days of its use make miscarriage inevitable. It is a small evergreen shrub that bears male and female flowers on different plants; it grows naturally in all climates. It is often planted in groves, though it gives off an unpleasant odour. Its leaves are used either in decoction or reduced to powder; in either form, they produce abortions. It will be discussed again in Juliette: we shall explain there with what other kinds of plants it is combined to obtain quicker and more certain effects.”

man in such a state; there is no sort of attention that should be spared him... a man thus engaged is a person of the greatest interest; there is no consideration he does not deserve..." and matters were soon arranged so that Bressac, both active and acted upon, was on the point of climaxing... "Stop, stop," cried his uncle, noticing it; "compose yourself, my friend; I wished only to observe this experiment. I hear dinner being announced—let us go to table; this is an important hour for me; at dessert I shall join you again—that is my moment—and we shall then enact a few scenes that will amuse us all."

They sat down at table. "Pardon me," said the count, "I was not expecting you; my nephew had not written to me; it is my everyday dinner that I am about to offer you; you will kindly excuse its mediocrity." Two soups were served; one of Italian pasta, with saffron; the other a bisque with ham coulis; in the center, a sirloin of beef in the English style; twelve hors d'œuvres, six from the kitchen and six from the garden; twelve entrées, four of butcher's meat, four of poultry, and four of pastry; a boar's head, set amid twelve roast dishes, followed by two courses of entremets, twelve of vegetables, six of different creams, and six of pastry; twenty dishes of fruits or compotes; six kinds of ices; eight sorts of wines, six different liqueurs, rum, punch, cinnamon spirit, chocolate, and coffee. Gernande attacked every dish; several were entirely emptied by him: he drank twelve bottles of wine; four of Volney to begin with; four of Aÿ with the roasts; the Tokay, the Paphos, the Madeira, and the Phalerne<sup>12</sup> were swallowed with the fruit: he finished with two bottles of island liqueurs, a pint of rum, two bowls of punch, and ten cups of coffee. The d'Esterval and the Marquis de Bressac, at least as great eaters, had kept pace with him, but they appeared heated; whereas Gernande was as fresh as if he had just awakened. As for Justine, whom they had been willing to allow to sit at the end of the table, reserve, sobriety, and great modesty—such were the

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<sup>12</sup> It is the famous wine of which Horace speaks, and which is gathered in the vicinity of Naples.

habitual virtues she constantly opposed to the coarse intemperance of all the scoundrels among whom her unhappy fate had placed her.

“Well then,” said Gernande as he rose from table, “do you feel disposed for the execution of a few lewd scenes? As for me, I confess, this is my moment.” — “Yes, by God, let us do something,” said Bressac; “the sample of the male seraglio I have just seen at your house, my dear uncle, gives me a remarkable desire to know the rest.” — “At your orders, my friend,” replied the count; “perhaps you will not be displeased to see my methods in the libidinous act; I will show them to you with Justine.” — “And your wife, monsieur?” said Dorothée. — “Oh! you will not see her for two or three days; she rests after each of my sessions; she requires a long respite; you will judge of it by what you are about to see. Madame,” continued Gernande, again addressing Dorothée, “all my turpitudes are going to astonish you; but I am told you are philosophical and voluptuous; with such qualities nothing astonishes, and since one has passions oneself, one finds those of others quite simple.” — “Charming cousin,” said Dorothée, “I regard as a mark of esteem the frank and naïve manner in which you are about to open yourself before me; be well convinced besides that no excess surprises me, and that with my tastes and my caprices, it is never anything but the mediocrity of those of others of which one may complain: I beg you to assign me a role; I shall fulfill that which you indicate, as victim or sacrificer.” — “Victim? no,” said Gernande, “I would hurt you; I am going to hurt this girl very much. I bleed,” he continued, beginning to jerk the most mediocre... the most astonishingly small member, relative to his enormous size... “yes, I bleed; such is my fancy; and I add to it the cruel episode of wishing to proceed to this operation only when the object I use has a full stomach: from this precaution there necessarily results a more constant upheaval in the organization; and it is to this disorder, perhaps as much as to the blood I cause to flow, that the erection I obtain is due.” — “It is charming,” said Bressac, approaching

his uncle and jerking his cock, "it has delightful details and refinements"; and Gernande, stripping down the marquis, jerked him with one hand while handling his buttocks with the other. "As for you, my dear cousin," he continued, addressing d'Esterval, "I never tire of touching your fine cock; you will fuck my wife, is it not so, my friend?" — "In truth," said d'Esterval, "I will do to her whatever you wish." — "Even harm?" — "Oh! horrors... abominations..." and meanwhile, by Gernande's orders, the two women were undressing... "Oh! damn it, hide your cunt, ladies," he said to Dorothée and to Justine, whom he saw ready to present him altars so little worthy of his worship; "conceal that, I beg you, otherwise you would see me impotent, unable to recover for six weeks." Bressac placed triangular handkerchiefs, tied upon the loins; and the two women advanced. After having for a moment kissed their asses; after having handled them, slapped them, he took one of Justine's arms, examined it; took the other, examined it likewise, and asked her how many times she had been bled. "Twice, monsieur," replied Justine; and during this dialogue and what follows, Dorothée, on her knees between the libertine's thighs, sucked his cock, while Bressac and d'Esterval, in another corner of the room, amused themselves in various ways with the two boys we described when introducing our readers into this house. Gernande, continuing his examination, pressed his fingers upon Justine's veins, as when one wishes to swell them in order to proceed with bloodletting, and when he saw them at the point he desired, he applied his mouth to them, sucking them. "Come, whore," he said harshly to our unfortunate Justine, "prepare yourself, I am going to make your blood flow." — "Oh! monsieur..." — "Believe me," continued Gernande, whose head was inflamed, "believe me, slut, do not attempt to play the prude here; resistance would not succeed with you; I have means of bringing to reason the women who wish to oppose my desires." His hands then placed themselves upon Justine's buttocks; he kneaded them with force; his nails, long and hooked, imprinting themselves in

the flesh, left there bloody marks, which his lips immediately sucked. Sometimes he took pinches of that same flesh, which he softened to the point of bruising it; the next instant he did as much upon her breasts... compressing the nipple with such violence that Justine uttered loud cries... "Bravo, my uncle," said Bressac then; "let us be, I beg you, in open revolt against the breasts; that feminine part must be the one that sodomites like us must most utterly detest; the breast is an abomination to those who cherish arses, — "Oh! I hate them more than words can say," continued Gernande, biting Justine's; he then made her take a few steps forward, then back towards him in reverse, so as not to lose sight of the view of our heroine's beautiful arse; as soon as she was near him, he made her bend over, stand straight, clench, spread her legs; then he would bend down before the object of his adoration, biting it in several places, and even on the orifice; but, in a most singular whim, all these kisses were an imitation of sucking; he did not give a single one that did not have this action as its aim; one might have said that he was suckling each of the parts to which his lips were drawn. It was during these preliminary examinations that she was asked for many details about her adventures at the convent of Sainte-Marie; and, without realising that her accounts were inflaming her tormentors, poor Justine recounted them all with as much truth as candour. Here Gernande desired some boys; but seeing those who were there too occupied with Bressac and d'Esterval, she rang the bell: two new ones appeared; they were barely sixteen years old, and of the most pleasant appearance; they approached her, whilst Dorothee was still sucking him. As soon as the lecher saw them within his reach, he released the noose of a thick strand of pink ribbon that held up a pair of white gauze knickers, and laid bare the two prettiest little bottoms in the world: after having kissed them for a moment in his own way, he sucked their cocks, whilst continuing to pinch Justine's buttocks and nipples. Whether through habit among young men or the skill of this satyr, in a mere few minutes nature, having been overcome,

caused what it expelled from the members of the other two to flow into the mouth of one; and the scoundrel swallowed the semen. Such was the manner in which this libertine exhausted the children he had in his house, and such is the reason for the state of languor in which we have depicted them. The homage paid by the count to Justine's charms went on endlessly; yet not the slightest wavering in the temple where his incense burned; neither his kisses nor his desires strayed from it for a single minute. He had d'Esterval rise; one of the young lovers took her place and sucked his cock: seizing the buttocks of the one leaving her post, he treated her much as he had just treated Justine; but as he did not wish to bleed her, he examined her arse rather than her arms; he praised that arse singularly; and, addressing the husband: 'Sir,' he said to him, 'if you are not fucking the boy whom I believe you are fondling, would you do me the favour of coming to sodomise your wife; I shall ask my nephew to fuck you in the arse; two Ganymedes will fuck you, whilst, with the help of the other two, I shall proceed, on the lovely Justine, to my surgical operation.' D'Esterval, who had been doing nothing but fondling and groping the young boy in question, stepped forward, pike in hand; and Dorothée, presenting her lovely arse, was impaled in an instant. Bressac, a great admirer of d'Esterval's arse, likewise left the young lover he was groping to come and sodomise his cousin. The young men surround them, one touching her arse, the other his cock, whilst Gernande, delighted to see such a group forming under her lascivious gaze, busies herself with forming her own. "Narcisse," he says to one of the young men he had kept close to him, "here is the new chambermaid I have chosen for the countess; I must test her—give me my lancets"; and Narcisse immediately presents them to his master. Justine is unnerved; she shudders; everyone laughs at her embarrassment. "Position her, Zephyr," continues Gernande, addressing her other young lover; and this handsome youth, approaching Justine, says to her, with a smile: "Do not be afraid, mademoiselle, this procedure can only do you the greatest good;

position yourself like this. She was to be lightly supported on her knees, at the edge of a stool placed in the middle of the room, her arms held up by two black ribbons, attached to the ceiling.

Hardly was she in this posture when the count approached her, the lancet in his hand. He could scarcely breathe; his eyes sparkled; his face inspired terror. He bound both arms, and, in less than the blink of an eye, pricked them both. A cry burst from his inflamed breast; two or three blasphemies accompanied it, and, as soon as he saw the blood, he went to sit down beside Dorothée's group. Narcisse, on his knees between his legs, sucked him; and Zéphyre, his feet upon the arms of his master's chair, presented to him the same object to suck, while offering his own to be drawn by the other. Gernande seized Zéphyre by the loins, pressed him against himself, quitting him from time to time only to cast his lascivious looks now upon the unfortunate girl being bled, now upon the active group bathed in Justine's blood. She, however, felt herself weakening: "Monsieur, monsieur," she cried, "have pity on me, I am fainting." She indeed staggered; she would have fallen without the ribbons that supported her; her arms wavered; her head swayed upon her shoulders; the jets of blood, diverted by these oscillations, came to flood her face. The count was in a frenzy; he rose, and, seizing his nephew's arse, all soaked with Justine's blood, he sodomized him, and discharged there, while the victim at last lost consciousness. D'Esterval, delighted with the spectacle, likewise drenched his wife's arse, who, her cunt pressed against the buttocks of a boy, buggered him with her clitoris, smearing his buttocks with semen and jerking his cock. Justine's arms were at last bound up, she was carried away; and our libertines, exhausted, went to refresh themselves in the gardens. Knowing the fits of delirium of the other inhabitants of this château, we shall not bring our readers back to them; but let us be permitted to fix their attention for a few moments upon those of Gernande. For nearly a full quarter of an hour the libertine was in ecstasy... and what an ecstasy! good



God! he writhed in it like a man seized with epilepsy; his frightful cries, his atrocious blasphemies, would have been heard a league away; he struck everything around him; his convulsions were terrifying.

Let us now abandon, for two days, the whole lively assembly: Justine's establishment with her mistress is the only matter that should occupy us.

It was at the end of this interval that Gernande had word sent to her to come and speak with him in the same salon where he had received her on her arrival; she was still weak, but otherwise in fairly good health.

"My child," he said to her after permitting her to sit down, "I shall seldom repeat with you the scene of the day before yesterday; it would exhaust you, and I have need of you for something else; but it was essential that I should acquaint you with my tastes, and with the kind of death by which you will perish in this house if you betray me... if only you allow yourself to be seduced by the woman with whom you are about to be placed. That woman is mine, you have been told so, Justine; and that title is doubtless the most fatal she can bear, since it obliges her to submit daily to the bizarre passion to which I have just subjected you. Do not imagine, moreover, that I treat her thus out of vengeance... out of contempt... out of any feeling of hatred; it is merely the history of passions. Nothing equals the pleasure I taste in shedding the blood of that creature; it is the most delicious enjoyment of my heart; I have never amused myself with her in any other way; it is three years that she has been chained to me, and that she regularly undergoes, every four days, the operation you have experienced. Her great youth (she is scarcely twenty), the particular care taken of her, the abundant nourishment she receives, all that sustains her: but with such a condition, you understand well that I can neither let her go out nor show her to other people, except to those who, having nearly the same tastes as I, must from that moment excuse mine. I therefore have her passed off as mad; and her mother, the only person she has

left in the world, living in her château six leagues from here, is so convinced of it that she does not even dare come to see her. The countess often implores mercy; there is nothing she does not attempt to soften me, but she will never succeed. My lust has dictated her sentence; it is unchangeable; it will go on in this manner as long as she can endure it; nothing shall be lacking to her during her life, and, as I like to exhaust her, I shall sustain her as long as possible... when she can bear it no longer... so much the better... She is my fourth; I shall soon have a fifth, a sixth... a twentieth; nothing troubles me less than the fate of a woman: there are so many in the world! and it is so sweet to change them! Be that as it may, Justine, your task is to care for her. She regularly loses two basins of blood every four days; but habit lends her strength; she no longer faints now; her exhaustion lasts twenty-four hours; she is tolerably well the other three days. You must understand, nevertheless, that this life displeases her exceedingly; there is nothing she does not attempt in order to make her true condition known to her mother; she has already seduced two of her women, whose schemes were fortunately discovered early enough to thwart their success; she is the cause of the death of those unfortunate creatures; I had them expire before her eyes." — "You killed those two women, monsieur?" — "Yes; in such a case I bleed them from all four limbs and leave them to die thus." — "Oh God!" — "You understand well, Justine, that my wife now repents of having compromised those two women... she reproaches herself for their death; and, recognizing the immutability of her fate, she is beginning to resign herself and to promise no longer to seduce the persons with whom I surround her: if that were nevertheless to happen, I must warn you, you would be treated like the others. From this moment, therefore, regard yourself as no longer belonging to this world, since you may disappear from it at the slightest act of my will: such is your fate, Justine; fortunate if you conduct yourself well, dead in the contrary case... You have heard me: let us go to my wife."

Having nothing to object to so explicit a discourse, Justine followed her master. After passing through a long suite of apartments, as dark and as solitary as the rest of the château, she entered an antechamber where two old women were found, whom she was told were under her orders for everything concerning the countess's service. They opened the door; Gernande and Justine found themselves in the apartment where the young and unhappy wife of this monster was, lying upon a couch, in a state of pallor and dejection easy to imagine. She rose as soon as she perceived her husband, and respectfully came to ask his orders. "Listen to me," said Gernande, not allowing her to sit down again, though she seemed scarcely able to support herself, "here is a woman whom my nephew Bressac brings me to attend upon you; I recommend her to you: if ever you have the desire to seduce her, do not at least attempt it without recalling the fate of those who preceded her." — "All attempts would be useless, monsieur," said Justine, eager to serve her mistress and wishing to disguise her intentions; "yes, madame, I will attest it before you, all would be fruitless; you shall not utter a word... you shall not make a gesture, that I do not immediately inform your husband of it, and certainly I shall not risk my life to serve you." — "I shall undertake nothing that might place you in that position, mademoiselle," said that poor woman, who did not yet discern the motives of Justine's affected severity; "I ask of you only your care." — "It shall be entirely yours, madame," replied the new maid, "but nothing beyond." And the count, delighted, pressing Justine's hand: "Admirable! my child," he said to her in a low voice; "keep your word, and your fortune is made." He then showed her the room she was to occupy, adjoining that of madame; and afterward made her observe that the arrangement of this apartment, secured by excellent doors and surrounded by double grilles at all its openings, left no hope of escape. "Here is, however, a terrace," continued Gernande, leading Justine into a small flower garden on the same level as the apartment; "but its height, I think, does not give you the desire to measure its walls.

The countess may come here to breathe the fresh air as much as she wishes; it is the only diversion my severities leave her. You will not quit her while she is here; you will observe all her movements, and give me a faithful account of them. Adieu.”

Justine returned to her mistress; and it is at the moment when they observe one another, when they examine each other, that we shall choose to give our readers an idea of this interesting woman.

## CHAPITRE XIV.

### What takes place at the château. — Dissertation on Women.

Madame de Gernande, nineteen and a half years old, had the finest figure, the noblest, the best shaped that it was possible to see; not one of her gestures, not one of her movements that was not grace, not one of her looks that was not feeling. Her eyes were of the most beautiful black, though she was blonde; nothing equaled their expression; but a sort of languor, the result of her misfortunes, made them a thousand times more affecting still. She had very white skin and the most beautiful hair, a very small mouth, and teeth of such freshness... lips of a vivid crimson... one would have said that Love himself had colored her with tints borrowed from the goddess of flowers. Her nose was aquiline, narrow, finely drawn at the top, and crowned with two ebony eyebrows; the chin perfectly lovely; a face, in a word, of the most beautiful oval, in the whole of which there reigned a kind of charm, of naïveté, of candor, that would much rather have made this enchanting countenance be taken for that of an angel than for the features of a mortal. Her arms, her breasts, her buttocks were of a brilliance... of a roundness... made, in a word, to serve as models for artists. A light, dark down shaded the prettiest cunt in the world, supported by well-shaped thighs; and what was surprising, given the countess's misfortunes, was that nothing impaired her fullness. Her arse was as round, as fleshy, as firm, as plump as if her waist had been more pronounced and she had always lived in the bosom of happiness.

There were nevertheless over all this dreadful traces of her husband's cruelties; but nothing blighted, nothing altered; the image of a beautiful lily upon which the impure hornet had left a few stains. To so many gifts Madame de Gernande joined a gentle character, a romantic mind... a sensitive heart... she was educated, talented, possessed a natural art of seduction against which none but her infamous husband could resist, a pleasing tone of voice, and much piety. Such was Gernande's wife, such was the angelic creature against whom he had plotted. It seemed that the more she inspired feeling, the more she inflamed his ferocity, and that the abundance of gifts she had received from nature became only so many additional vehicles for the villainies of that monster.

"When were you bled, madame?" Justine asked the countess as soon as they were alone. — "Three days ago," the latter replied... "and it is tomorrow... they will surely make of that horror a charming spectacle for Monsieur de Gernande's friends." — "Does it happen, then, madame, that he indulges in this before witnesses?" — "Before those who think as he does... Oh! you will see all that... you will see all that, mademoiselle." — "And madame does not grow weak from all these bleedings?" — "Just heaven! I am not twenty, and I am certain one is no weaker at seventy: but it will end, I flatter myself; it is perfectly impossible that I should live long in this way. I shall go to rejoin my father; I shall seek, in the arms of the Supreme Being, a rest that men have so cruelly refused me in the world. And what had I done, great God, not to enjoy that rest? I have never desired the least harm to anyone, I love my neighbour, I respect my religion, I am an enthusiast for virtue; one of my greatest torments in the dreadful position in which I am is the impossibility in which I am kept of being able to be of use to anyone..." And tears accompanied this discourse. Our readers easily imagine that Justine's would soon have mingled with them, had she not had the greatest interest in disguising her agitation: but she swore, from that moment, to risk a thousand lives rather than fail to do

everything for a woman whose feelings and misfortunes seemed so similar to her own.

It was the hour of the countess's dinner. The two old women came to inform Justine to have her go into her cabinet, because it was not to be allowed that even these old women should have any communication with her. Madame de Gernande, accustomed to all these precautions, submitted to them without difficulty, and the dinner was served. Shortly afterward the countess returned, sat down at table, and invited Justine to keep her company, with an air of kindness... of affability, which forever won the heart of the one who had been assigned to watch over her. There were at least twenty dishes on the table.

"With regard to this matter, you see that care is taken of me, mademoiselle," said Madame de Gernande. — "I am not unaware, madame, that Monsieur le comte's will is that nothing be lacking to you." — "Oh! yes; but since the motives for these attentions are nothing but cruelty, they touch me very little."

Madame de Gernande, exhausted and urgently compelled by nature to continual restoration, ate a great deal; she asked for red partridges and a Rouen duckling, which were brought to her at once. After the meal, she went to take the air on her terrace, but leaning upon Justine; it would have been impossible for her to take a step without that precaution. It was then that she showed all parts of her body to her new companion; the latter was struck with horror at the prodigious number of scars with which this poor woman was covered. "He does not confine himself to the arms, as you see," said Madame de Gernande; "there is not a single part of my unhappy body in which he does not take pleasure in seeing the blood flow." And she proved it to her by showing her her feet, her belly, her breasts, her buttocks, and even the lips of her cunt. "Moreover," said this unfortunate woman, "if he did not have the dreadful refinement of choosing for this operation only the moment when I have just eaten, perhaps I should suffer less! this redoubling of ferocity ruins my stomach; I can no longer digest." — "What! madame, could you not abstain from

eating on that day?" — "I am not warned; he takes me by surprise; I know well that his intervals are three or four days, but I can never guess the moment; and it will never be the one in which he finds me prepared that he chooses."

Meanwhile, Gernande's friends were not wasting their time. The twelve Ganymedes then in service at the château (for it was always in that number that they were brought there every three months); these twelve boys had already been fucked so many times that people were beginning to tire of them; Dorothée had had herself taken by all the valets and all the gardeners of the house, when at last the entire company begged Gernande to hasten the torment of the countess, whose details all were so eager to admire.

"It will be for after dinner," said Gernande; "let us prepare ourselves for this grand work by one of the most lascivious meals. Justine and Dorothée shall dine naked, six of my little Cupids shall mingle with them in the same state, the other six shall serve us, dressed as priestesses of Diana, and I promise you the best dinner you have yet had in my house."

It was indeed difficult to see anything more sumptuous, more exquisite, more rare, and more delicious than everything that appeared at this meal. The four corners of the earth seemed to have contributed their treasures, of every kind, to cover the table of these libertines; one saw there at once wines from every country and dishes from every season: this single dinner cost more, no doubt, than would have been needed to feed ten or twelve unfortunate families for a month.

"After the pleasures of lust," said Gernande, "there are none more divine than those of the table." — "They lend each other such strength," said Bressac, "that it is impossible for the followers of the former not to adore the latter." — "For nothing is so delightful as to gorge oneself with succulent dishes," said Gernande; "I know nothing that so voluptuously tickles my stomach and my head; and the vapors of these savory foods, which come to caress the brain, prepare it so well to receive the impressions



of lust that, as my nephew says, it is difficult for a true libertine not to adore the table. I have often desired, I confess, to imitate the debaucheries of Apicius, that famous Roman glutton, who had living slaves thrown into his fishponds to render the flesh of his fish more delicate. Cruel in my lusts, I would be just as much so in those excesses; and I would sacrifice a thousand individuals if it were necessary to eat a dish more appetizing or more refined. I am not surprised that the Romans made a god of gluttony. Long live forever the peoples who thus deify their passions! What a difference between the foolish followers of Jesus and those of Jupiter! the former have the absurdity of making a crime of the action revered by the latter.” — “It is said that Cleopatra,” said d’Esterval, “one of the most gluttonous women of antiquity, had the habit of never sitting down at table without having taken several enemas.” — “Nero also imitated that custom,” replied Gernande; “I sometimes make use of it myself, and I find it beneficial.” — “I replace it by having myself sodomized,” said Bressac; “the physical effect is nearly the same, and the moral sensation infinitely more delightful: I never dine without having myself fucked a dozen times.” — “As for me,” said Gernande, “I make use of certain aromatics, among which tarragon predominates; a drink is prepared for me so stimulating that I devour as soon as I have drunk it: since it is perfectly natural to inflame oneself for the pleasures of the senses, why should one not likewise excite oneself to those of gluttony? Oh! I confess it,” continued this ogre, gorging himself on the most delicious dishes, “Intemperance is my divinity; I place its idol in my temple beside that of Venus, and it is only at the feet of both that I can find happiness.” — “What I have often imagined on this subject will seem very wicked to you,” said Dorothée; “but you allow everything to be said. I confess that, while thus stuffing myself with food, one of my most sensual pleasures would be to place before my eyes unfortunate beings wasted by hunger.” — “I understand that,” said Bressac; “but the man who would exercise the passion you describe would have to be powerful enough, exalted

enough, for his gluttony to exhaust everything around him, and for it to be because of his immoderate consumption that those subject to him would die of hunger.” — “Yes, yes,” replied d’Esterval, “you have perfectly grasped my idea; one cannot imagine what I would eat at such a meal!” — “Yes; the feast of the blood of men,” said Gernande; “Tiberius, I believe, had conceived something of the kind.” — “As for me,” said d’Esterval, “I am extremely fond of Nero, who, on leaving the table, asks, ‘What is a poor man?’”<sup>13</sup> — “Assuredly,” said Bressac, “if it is true, as we cannot doubt, that intemperance is the mother of all vices, and that the mire of vices is the earthly paradise of man, there is nothing we should not do to excite within ourselves what can best lead us to intemperance. And what new strength, indeed, do we not acquire for scenes of lust when we pass to them after an orgy at table! how then our vital spirits are exalted! It seems that a new heat circulates in our veins; lascivious objects are painted there with more energy; the desire we have for them becomes of such force that it is no longer possible to resist it. Do you succumb? you scarcely perceive the losses; the reserve acquired is such that it can easily supply an infinity of excursions which you would not dare undertake otherwise; everything is embellished, everything is adorned, illusion covers all with its golden veils, and you would then attempt things that would horrify you in cold blood. O voluptuous Intemperance! I regard you as the renewer of pleasures; it is only with you that they are fully enjoyed; it is only through you that they have no thorns; you alone smooth their path; you alone drive away imbecile Remorse; you alone know how delightfully to trouble that Reason, so cold and so monotonous, by which all our passions are poisoned without you.”

“My nephew,” said Gernande, “if you were not much richer than I, I would give you two thousand louis for the eulogy you have just made of one of the dearest passions of my heart.” — “Richer than you, my uncle?” — “Oh! yes; you have more than

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<sup>13</sup> See Trimalcho’s famous banquet described by Petronius.

twelve hundred thousand livres of income, and I am poor enough not to have eight hundred thousand. I confess... I cannot conceive how one can live on less than a million a year.” — “Monsieur,” said d’Esterval, “I do not have it, and yet I live.” — “Well, yes; but you have submitted yourself to a manner of life that requires nothing, and the trade you practice must increase your funds every day. I know nothing so delightful as the career you have undertaken; if I were younger, I would certainly follow no other. Well then, I wager that with that and your patrimony you make at least five or six hundred thousand livres of income.” — “About that.” — “You see then that we are all rich here, and that our way of thinking, our tastes, our interests must absolutely resemble one another.” — “Ah!” replied d’Esterval, “I have the misfortune of being insatiable; and it is even more from avarice than from libertinage that you see me follow the trade I practice.” — “It is certain that you could do without it.” — “I would not exist without that delicious habit. I love to see my fortune increase every day, and I adore the idea of enlarging it at the expense of others. I kill from principles of debauchery... because of the ferocity of my libertinage; but it is only from greed that I steal; and even if I had millions of income, it seems to me I would still steal.” — “I understand that,” said Gernande, “no one adopts as I do the sentiment that makes one take and makes one keep. I might swim in floods of gold, and I would not give a sou in alms; and, except for my pleasures, I would not allow myself the slightest expense. You know my fortune, you know my expenditures... well, look at my coat, I have worn it for twenty years... I have another like it, which, I hope, will see me to the grave.” — “So then,” said Bressac, “you wish, my dear uncle, to deserve in all justice the fine name of miser.” — “But,” said Gernande, “if, though from other principles, your mother had not been as avaricious as I, would you be so rich today?” — “Do not speak to him of that circumstance of his life,” said d’Esterval, “you would make him blush.” — “He would, by God, be

very wrong,” said Gernande; “he has done nothing but the simplest thing in the world in killing his mother. One is eager to enjoy—nothing more natural; besides, she was a peevish, devout, imperious woman, he detested her, nothing more ordinary. Look here, he is my heir; well then, I wager that my life does not make him impatient: I have the same tastes, the same way of thinking; he is certain to find a friend in me. Such considerations are bonds strong enough among men that they never seek to break them.” — “You are right, my uncle, we may perhaps commit many crimes together; but we shall never undertake any that harm us. I have, however, seen the moment when our cousin respected that consideration little: he had devoted me.” — “Yes,” said d’Esterval, “as a relative, never as a companion in debauchery; as soon as I learned what you were capable of, we occupied ourselves only with loving one another and joining forces.” — “Be that as it may, you will admit that Madame d’Esterval had great difficulty in sparing me?” — “Do not reproach me with it,” replied Dorothée; “your praise lies in your sentence. The terrible habit I have of sacrificing the men who please me traced your doom beside my declaration of love; less handsome, you might perhaps have escaped.” — “Certainly, my cousin,” said Gernande, laughing, “you do not seem to wish that one should be very eager to please you?” — “Messieurs, I am selfish like you, and provided my passions are served, love and vanity count for nothing.” — “She is right,” said Gernande; “that is how all women should think; if they all resembled my cousin, I believe I would reconcile myself with the species.” — “So it is a very inveterate hatred,” said d’Esterval. — “Oh! I abhor them; I would annihilate the entire race if heaven entrusted me for an instant with its thunderbolt.” — “I do not understand,” said Bressac, darting his tongue into Justine’s mouth, “how one can detest such gentle little creatures... so interesting!” — “I understand it very well,” said d’Esterval, belching into the mouth of a boy; “I perfectly understand that one prefers this pretty class to the other.” — “Oh, fuck, you are hard, my husband,” said Dorothée,

"I can feel it: well, do not restrain yourself; fuck that pretty boy; provided this one fucks me in the arse, it is all the same to me," she continued, inclining her buttocks toward the one who was near her. — "God damn it," said Gernande, "there you all are beside yourselves, for seven or eight bottles of wine apiece." — "Oh! as for drunk," said Bressac, pinching Justine's breasts until she cried out, "it is quite certain that I am... In truth, my dear uncle, it is unheard-of how I would like to see you bleed your wife... Will you allow me to bugger you while that goes on?... Good, is not that Dorothée who is vomiting?" — "I am drunk, I." — "Well then, get yourself fucked, bitch," said her husband, letting out a great fart, "that sobers one." — "In truth, my uncle," said Bressac, "we take great liberties in your house." — "Do not restrain yourselves, my friends, I like all that; one must fart, shit, vomit when one is drunk; one must discharge; all that relieves." — "Bressac, then, support Dorothée; pressed by the cock of that little boy who is fucking her in the arse, do you not see she is about to fall?" — "How the devil do you expect me to take her," said Bressac, "the whore, drenched in her vomit here, now swimming there in the shit she has just made." — "Well then," said Gernande, "let a boy clean all that; help him, Justine. D'Esterval, ask your wife if she wishes to go to bed?" — "Go to bed!... by God!" replied Dorothée; "no, no, I want to fuck; it is over now, I have nothing left in my belly; here I am ready to begin again." — "Let us go to your wife, my uncle, I beg you," said Bressac; "the diversion is necessary: let Justine go and warn her." Everything was carried out, while our villains, scarcely able to support themselves, tried their strength in order to rush toward further infamies. It is unnecessary to depict the agitation of our unhappy wife when she learned that her persecutor, escorted by men as debauched and as ferocious as himself, was about to come to contemplate or redouble the horror of the visits she was accustomed to receive from him: she had just left the table. "My dear mademoiselle," she asked Justine, "are they very drunk... very heated... very dreadful?" — "Oh! yes, madame, they are raving."

— “Great God! I am about to suffer atrocities... You will not abandon me during this cruel scene; you will remain near me, will you not, mademoiselle?” — “Certainly, if I am permitted.” — “Oh! yes, yes... And who are these people? One of them, you say, is Monsieur de Gernande’s nephew, the Marquis de Bressac?... Oh! he is a monster, I know him by reputation; they say he poisoned his mother... And Monsieur de Gernande can receive in his house the murderer of his own sister!... what infamy, great God! The other is, you say, an assassin by profession?” — “Yes, madame; a cousin of Monsieur de Gernande, who keeps an inn out of libertinage, in order to rob... to cut the throats of those who lodge there.” — “Oh! what people!... what people! So, these are the villains to whom my husband is going to deliver me? And who is that woman they have with them?” — “The innkeeper’s wife, as wicked... as corrupt as they.” — “Oh! mademoiselle, is it then possible that the gentleness and mildness of our sex can be joined to all the depravity of that of men?” — “Do you not know, madame,” replied Justine, “that a woman who has renounced modesty... the delicacy that should characterize her sex, enters, and more quickly, and more blindly than men, upon the path of vice and intemperance?” — “And you believe, mademoiselle, that Monsieur de Gernande will permit me also to become the target of the monstrous tastes of that abominable creature?” — “Ah! I do not doubt it, madame”; and Justine had scarcely finished her reply when the company made itself heard. Immoderate laughter, dreadful remarks... many blasphemies announced it to Madame de Gernande, whose eyes filled with tears, even while she prepared herself nevertheless for submission.

The procession was composed of the husband, Monsieur and Madame d’Esterval, Bressac, the six prettiest Ganymedes, the two old women for the service, and our unfortunate Justine... who, deeply troubled by the infamies she saw being prepared... fearing to be outraged herself... certain she could be of no use to

her mistress, inwardly formed no other desire than to be a hundred leagues away.

All the ceremonies we are about to detail here were observed regularly at each of this cruel husband's visits; only a few particulars were altered, depending on the greater or lesser number of people Gernande admitted to these orgies.

The countess, clad only in a Greek-style gauze chemise, fell to her knees the moment the count entered; and it was in this state of humiliation that our villains examined her. "Truly, Uncle," said Bressac, staggering slightly, "you have there a most charming creature for a wife..." Then, stammering... "May I, my dear aunt, have the honour of greeting you... I am truly moved to see you in such a pitiable state; my dear uncle must have good cause to complain of you, to treat you in this manner; for my dear uncle is truly a just man." — "It must be," said Madame d'Esterval, tormented by a violent hiccup, "that the Countess is terribly in the wrong with her husband; otherwise, it would be impossible for a man so humane, so obliging... so gentle, to demand such things of a lady about whom he had no cause for complaint." — "Oh no, I see what it is," said d'Esterval; "it is an act of adoration on the part of Madame; it is a form of worship she offers to her husband. — My friends," said Gernande, "you will agree that it is fitting for her to pay this homage to your backsides, and I beg all three of you to present the god to her, so that he may receive the incense at once." — "Ah! By Jove, my uncle's right," said Bressac, immediately pulling down his trousers and exposing the part of his body he was most willing to reveal... "Yes, yes, I can see it's my arse my dear aunt wants to worship, and I'm showing it to her with great pleasure." — "Come now, come now, all bottoms in the air," said Gernande; and in an instant there were those of the other two members of the company, Justine's, the young men's, and even the old women's, surrounding poor Gernande so closely that she felt as though she were being pressed, trampled upon by this multitude of buttocks, which came, so to speak, to rub against her chin. "A

bit of order here, uncle,” says Bressac, “for we’re going to suffocate madame: let everyone come in turn to let her kiss this part, which seems to arouse her desires so much; I shall set the example first.” A little shit accompanies the action; and the procedure seems so pleasant that there is no one, except Justine, who does not immediately set about imitating him. “Come now, madam,” said Gernande at last, “are you ready?” — “For anything, sir,” replied the countess humbly: “you know full well that I am your victim.” Gernande then orders Justine to undress her mistress; and, however much the latter may loathe it, she has no choice but to resign herself: the poor woman, alas! only complied when she could do no otherwise, but willingly... never; she therefore removes her mistress’s chemise and exposes her naked to the gaze of the lewd assembly. “There, upon my word, is a superb woman,” said d’Esterval, whom the sight strongly aroused. — “Well then,” said Gernande, “fuck her, my friend, since you find her beautiful; I give her to you; pardon, my nephew, if I do not give you the preference; but I know your tastes... I reserve the ass for you, and if it tempts you, you might, it seems to me, place her between you; consanguinity will make me perform a miracle; and, though a woman’s arse seduces me scarcely more than her front, I shall, if d’Esterval wishes, take, in concert with him, the opposite route to the one he will follow: pray direct us, my uncle.” — “Willingly,” said Gernande, “nothing amuses me more than to labor myself at my own dishonour”; saying this, he seized d’Esterval’s cock and guided it into his wife’s cunt, making her lie back upon the fucker.; the most beautiful buttocks in the world are, in this position, at the mercy of Bressac, who, guided in the same way by Gernande, has soon overcome every obstacle; the old lecher takes his place on an armchair, facing the scene; the six young lovers surround him; he jerks one off in each hand; two are placed near his nose, so that he can suck one alternately, and the other two take turns to return to his wretched member what he is doing to the two he has placed near his mouth. “Socratisé my nephew,” he says to the old women, “the lads like to



have their arses stroked whilst they're fucking." — "Yes, yes," says Bressac, clinging tightly to his aunt and sodomising her right up to her pubic hair; "this episode is necessary; my uncle is right to demand it, but I'd like to return it to Justine." — "Nothing could be easier," says Gernande... "let her undress at once..." One must obey; and so our heroine is forced to present her buttocks to Bressac's lustful fingers, which, bringing all five together, form a mass voluminous enough to cruelly molest this poor girl's arse. Only Dorothée remained idle; the slut was wanking herself at the sight of the others' pleasure. "Madam," said Gernande to her, "slide under my wife, she'll wank you; I'll give you a young lover who'll fuck you, whilst your clitoris is being ravaged by my wife, and your arsehole vigorously pounded by Justine. Come now, my friends, it seems to me the group is quite well put together; let us now work in concert. Tell me, at least, gentlemen, what you think of my wife? It is hardly worth my while to let you have her if you do not tell me your opinion." — "Well, my friend," said d'Esterval as he came inside her, "that's the finest praise I could give her; a woman has to really get under my skin to make me come like that, without any cruel antics... Ah! Goddamn it, what pleasure she's given me!" Bressac's cock, as he probed her arse, made her vagina so tight... "Oh! This pleasure is divine! — Goddamn it, I'm coming too... I can't take any more," said Dorothée... "But didn't you say that Madame was being bled? My cum would have flowed much better if I'd seen her blood spilling out." — "Well," said Bressac as he withdrew from her arse, "I'll save my cum for when the bleeding takes place: a bit more difficult than you, I didn't find in my aunt's arse everything I thought I'd find there; one is fussy with one's own kind. Go ahead then, Gernande, with this gentle operation, I beg you; my head is turned only for this, it is only this that I wish to see." And here Bressac could not help but show all the disgust that the consummation of an act had just caused him, an act that clashed so badly with principles he held almost as dear as his own life; he looked with disdain at the arse he had just fucked;

and drawing near to a catamite, as if to purify himself: "Well then! my uncle," he said, "well! for God's sake, shall we bleed ourselves?"

Gernande, highly aroused, began casting furious looks at his wife: "Yes, yes, we shall bleed her, the slut; do not fear that I shall spare her; come, madame," he continued, addressing his victim, "do your duty." Well versed in the ritual, Madame de Gernande, supported by Justine, climbed onto the count's chair and presented her buttocks for him to kiss; "spread, you bitch," said Gernande brutally, and he long indulged himself in what he wished to see, making her assume different positions; he parted... he closed, teased with his tongue the orifice from which Bressac's cock emerged; soon carried away by the ferocity of his passions, he seized a pinch of flesh, compressed it, tore it, and as soon as the wound was made, the wretch sucked the blood. During these preliminaries, Bressac, attentive, had himself stroked by a boy, d'Esterval fingered his wife, the five other boys surrounded the count, sucking him or being sucked by him. He then stretched himself out upon a sofa, wished that his wife, astride him, should continue to keep her backside upon his face, while with her mouth she would return to him, by means of suction, the same services he had just received from the Ganymedes, whom he continued to pleasure with both hands; Justine's hands, meanwhile, were at work upon his buttocks, stimulating him with all their force.

This posture, maintained for nearly a quarter of an hour, still produced nothing; it had to be changed. The old women stretched the countess out on a chaise longue, lying on her back, her thighs spread as widely as possible. The sight of that cunt threw Gernande into a kind of frenzy; he contemplated it trembling, his eyes blazing, he blasphemed, seized the lancets, rushed like a madman upon his victim, and pricked her on the belly and on the mound in seven or eight different places, while a boy did not cease to suck him. It was here that Bressac and d'Esterval, further inflamed by this intensification of lust, each took a boy.

Meanwhile, the wounds inflicted by Gernande were still very slight: he invited Dorothée to lick his wife's gaping sex; she did so; then Gernande placed within his reach the fine ass of Madame d'Esterval, to treat it with the same severity he had just employed upon his wife. — "Do not restrain yourself," said d'Esterval, seeing that he was being cautious; "prick, prick; there is never any harm in making women's arses bleed, they are all the better for it."

Gernande then seizes Justine and, placing her on Dorothée's back, treats our heroine's buttocks just as he has just done to those of d'Esterval's wife. He is constantly being sucked off; occasionally, however, he forces the young lovers to suck each other off, and he arranges them so that whilst he is sucking one, another returns the favour to him, and the one he is sucking returns from his mouth to render the same service to the one who is sucking him. The Count received much, but gave nothing; his satiety or impotence was such that even the greatest efforts failed to rouse him from his numbness; he seemed to feel very violent titillations, but nothing manifested itself. Sometimes he ordered Justine to suck the young lovers herself, and to come and return to his mouth at once the 'incense' she would gather from them. At last, all the positions broke up; but the countess remained stretched out on her sofa. It was then that Gernande begged all the spectators to help with her plan. "What is this about?" said Bressac. "Here is a woman I am handing over to you, my friends," said Gernande; "I implore you to insult her, to molest her, to torment her in every way and by every possible means; the more you heap insults upon her, the more you will inflame my passions." The idea, seized upon with fervour, is carried out with equal vigour: the old women, the young men, Dorothée, d'Esterval and Bressac in particular, insult the poor countess with such arrogance, treat her with such scant consideration, and berate her with such ferocity, that her tears flow in torrents. One spits in her face, another slaps her, yet another sneers at her, whilst a third farts in her mouth, and a fourth kicks her in the

arse. One cannot even begin to imagine all the whims, all the mistreatment to which this unfortunate woman is subjected for over two hours, until d'Esterval takes a fancy to sodomising her: she is positioned so that she is forced to suck her husband, whilst at the same time Dorothée sodomises her from below, and Bressac sodomises her uncle, whilst kissing Justine's buttocks; the young men surround the group, letting some have their cocks sucked whilst others have their delicious behinds fucked; Gernande, being sucked by his wife, amused himself by spitting on her; ever the target of this terrible man's cruelties, one might have said that the honour of belonging to him became a ticket to being his victim; the scoundrel was moved to cruelty only because of the bonds that lent strength to the outrages. The arrangement shifts again: Gernande places everyone to the right and left of his wife, intermingled so that here there is a man's arse, there a woman's; from some distance away, he examines the scene attentively; the next moment he draws closer, he touches, he compares, he caresses; he caused no one any pain; but when he came to his wife, it was nothing but slaps, pinches and bites; that poor arse already made one shudder just to look at it; finally, he wants all the men to sodomise the countess; he comes to seize their cocks one by one, positions them himself at the entrance to the marital anus, and thrusts them in, whilst Justine sucks him. Each receives his permission to fuck his wife's arse for a while; but it is only in her mouth that the act must be consummated; whilst one is at it, he is sucked by the other, and his tongue plunges into the arsehole presented by the agent; this act is long; the count grows irritated, he stands up, and wants Justine to take his wife's place. Our virtuous daughter begs Gernande, on her knees, not to demand such an abomination of her; but the desires of such a man are divine decrees! He therefore lays the countess on her back along a sofa, presses Justine onto her, her hips raised and turned towards him; he seizes all the cocks a second time, thrusting them one after another into poor Justine's arse, whilst she is forced to masturbate the countess and kiss her on the

mouth; as for him, his offering is the same: since each man can only act by presenting an arse to him, he passionately fucks all those presented to him, whilst continuing to demand of Justine's fuckers what he desired of his wife's. The rascal wants to suck all the cocks that have just sodomised our heroine; when everyone has had their turn, the libertine, in turn, steps up to the fray; "Superfluous efforts!" he cries. "That's not what I need: actually... actually... Come on, for fuck's sake, your arms..." Here everyone withdraws; everyone, in respectful silence, awaits the outcome of the event; Bressac and d'Esterval, being wanked by whores, have their lecherous eyes fixed on the hero. Gernande seizes his wife ferociously, placing her on her knees on a stool, her arms held aloft by broad black ribbons; Justine is tasked with securing the bands; he inspects the ligatures; finding them not tight enough, he tightens them with all his might, so that, he says, the blood may spurt forth with greater force. He kisses these arms thus compressed, he sucks the veins and pricks them both almost simultaneously; the blood spurts forth rapidly: Gernande is in ecstasy; he turns to stand opposite, whilst these two fountains flow; Justine sucks him, and he passes it, in turn, to four young lovers with whom he surrounds himself, without ceasing, however, to fix his eyes on the jets of blood that inflame him, and which seem to be the sole source of his dearest pleasures. Here the compassionate Justine, carried away by an overwhelming sense of pity, hastens, with all the fervour she can muster, the culmination of her master's pleasures, for she believes she sees in them the end of her unfortunate mistress's torments, and thus becomes a harlot out of benevolence, and a libertine out of virtue. At last, this gratifying conclusion arrives, but thanks to the efforts of d'Esterval. This meddlesome relative senses Gernande's need to be fucked; he lifts him up, shoves his enormous cock into his arse, whilst Bressac, aroused by the scene, brings his head close to the victim's spurting blood to drench his face; he was sodomising a young lover and ejaculating at the same time. It is then that all of Gernande's ferocity is unleashed; he approaches

his wife, he heaps insults upon her, presses his lips in turn to each wound, sucks and swallows several mouthfuls of blood. This liquid finishes intoxicating him; he is no longer in control of himself; his bellowing resembles that of a bull: he would strangle his wife, were he not restrained by the old women and by Justine; for his treacherous friends, far from calming him, incite him. "Let him do it," cried the unworthy Bressac, even though he had already ejaculated. "Do not hinder his passion," said Dorothée. "Eh, fuck," shouted d'Esterval, "what does it matter if he kills her or not; it's just one less woman." But the efforts to restrain him were no less intense. Justine, momentarily thrown off balance by the force of these jolts, kneels down again... takes him up once more. Dorothée, her buttocks exposed, strokes the base of the cock and fondles the balls. He is at last relieved of that inflamed fluid, whose heat, thickness, and above all abundance throw him into such a frenzy that one thinks him on the point of expiring. Seven or eight spoonfuls would scarcely have contained the quantity discharged, and even the thickest porridge would ill convey its consistency; yet with all that, scarcely any erection—indeed the very appearance of exhaustion. Such are the contradictions that those skilled in the matter will explain. The count ate excessively and spent very little. Was that the cause of this phenomenon?

Justine hastened to her mistress; she burned to staunch her blood. "One moment, by God," said d'Esterval, withdrawing a lust-foaming cock from Gernande's ass, in which he had done nothing but excite himself... "one moment, by heaven, does one suppose I am not to spill my seed as well?" He looked at everyone, without fixing on anyone. At last, coveting the unfortunate countess, covered in blood, he threw himself upon her and sodomized her as she nearly fainted; "come," he said, after a short course, withdrawing his cock and pressing it, "now you may help the slut as much as you like, but I had to discharge."

The victim's wounds were at last bound up, she was unfastened and laid upon a sofa in a state of great weakness; but our

libertines, and Gernande above all, without troubling themselves about her condition, without even deigning to cast a glance of pity upon this unfortunate victim of their rage, abruptly withdrew with their favourites, leaving the old women and Justine to set things in order as they pleased.

Such is the situation in which men may best be judged: is it a novice carried away by the ardor of his passions? Remorse will be painted upon his face when, in calm, he examines the fatal effects of his frenzy. Is it a libertine corrupted by every vice? such consequences will not alarm him; he observes them without trouble and without regret... perhaps even still with some stirrings of the infamous pleasure produced by his guilty intoxication. <sup>14</sup>[2]

Our libertines, however, more stirred than exhausted, soon, in speaking of the pleasures they had just enjoyed, found again in those details the strength necessary to desire new ones; they had withdrawn into a vast boudoir, escorted by the boys; and there, while kissing and handling them, each sought to rekindle in the charms of conversation some of the sparks of lust by which he had just been inflamed. "Do you know, my uncle," said Bressac, "that your passion is delightful?" — "I know nothing so piquant," said d'Esterval, "as this union of the ideas of lust and cruelty; there is nothing in the world that excites me so strongly, and there is no method that marries these ideas more delicately than the one Monsieur de Gernande employs." — "Yes," said Bressac, "but it seems to me I would not confine myself to the arms, I would bleed everywhere." — "That is what I do as well," said Gernande, "and the scars that cover my dear wife must have proved to you that there are very few parts of that beautiful body which have escaped my barbarity." — "But is it true," said d'Es-

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<sup>14</sup> But if, as one cannot doubt, the most guilty becomes the happiest, because his pleasures are not troubled by remorse, it would follow that crime contributes more to happiness than virtue. What a fatal conclusion for moralists!

terval, "that it is only your wife who has the art of strongly arousing you in the exercise of this passion?" — "Another woman would excite me as well," said Gernande; "but there is no doubt that mine electrifies me infinitely more than any other." — "This," said Dorothée, "must be closely connected with the principles monsieur holds regarding our sex." — "Oh! I am persuaded they are extremely harsh," said Bressac; "if my uncle would have the kindness to explain them to us, the whole company would no doubt hear them with pleasure." Gernande consented; and as at that moment Justine returned to give her master an account of the condition of the one whose care had been entrusted to her, she was permitted to be present at the dissertation which Gernande began in these terms:

"You tell me, my friends," said Gernande, "that my passions give you a rather poor opinion of my way of thinking about women, and indeed you are not mistaken when you suppose that I despise them as much as I hate them; but it is above all when such a woman is bound to me by the ties of marriage that you imagine my aversion and antipathy must redouble toward her. Before entering into the analysis of these sentiments, I must first ask you by what right you would claim, for example, that a husband is obliged to make his wife happy, and what title that wife dares to allege in order to demand it of him? The necessity of rendering one another happy can exist, you will agree, only between two beings equally endowed with the faculty of harming one another, and consequently between two beings of equal strength. Such an association cannot take place without there forming at once a pact between them, whereby each agrees to use his strength only in a way that cannot injure the other; but such a ridiculous convention cannot possibly exist between the strong being and the weak. By what right would the latter demand that the other spare him? and by what folly would the former bind himself to do so? I may consent not to use my strength against one who can make himself feared by his own; but for what reason should I diminish its effects toward the being



whom nature has subjected to me? You will answer, perhaps: out of pity. That sentiment is compatible only with a being who resembles me; and, as it is selfish, its effect exists only under the tacit condition that the individual who inspires my compassion would feel the same toward me. But if I am constantly superior to him, his compassion becoming useless to me, I owe it to myself never to purchase his by any sacrifice. Should I not be a dupe to feel pity for a being to whom I can never inspire it? Must I weep over the chicken that is slaughtered for my dinner? That creature, too far beneath me, having no relation to mine, can awaken no feeling in my heart. Now the relations of a wife to her husband are of no different a consequence than those of the chicken to me: both are domestic animals, to be used according to the views indicated by nature, without distinguishing them in any respect. But I ask you, ladies, if it were the intention of nature that your sex should be created for the happiness of ours, and vice versa, would that blind nature have committed so many absurdities in the construction of the one and the other? Would she have given them faults so grave that mutual aversion must necessarily result? Without seeking further examples, with the constitution you know me to possess, tell me, I beg you, my friends, what woman could I make happy? and conversely, what man could find pleasure in a woman if he were not endowed with the gigantic proportions necessary to satisfy her? Shall the moral qualities of such a being compensate us for her physical defects? What reasonable man, knowing a woman thoroughly, would not exclaim with Euripides: 'The god who brought woman into the world may boast of having produced the worst and most troublesome of all creatures for man'? If it is therefore proved that the two sexes are in no way suited to one another, and that there is not a complaint made by one that does not apply equally to the other, it follows that nature did not create them for their mutual happiness; she may have given them the desire to approach one another for the purposes of propagation, but not to bind themselves in order to find happiness in one

another. The weaker, having no real title to claim the pity of the stronger, and no longer able to argue that he may find happiness in her, has no recourse but submission. And since, despite the difficulty of such mutual happiness, individuals of both sexes strive only to obtain it, the weaker must gather from that submission the only portion of felicity available to her, while the stronger must seek his in whatever form of oppression he chooses, since it is proved that the sole happiness of strength lies in the exercise of its power—that is to say, in the most complete oppression of the weak. Thus, the happiness the two sexes cannot find together, they will find—one in blind obedience, the other in the full exercise of domination. And if nature had not intended that one sex should dominate and tyrannize over the other, would she not have created them equal in strength? In making one inferior to the other in every respect, has she not clearly shown that it was her will that the stronger should make use of the rights she has given him? The more he extends his authority, the more he renders unhappy the woman bound to his fate, and the better he fulfills the designs of nature. It is not by the complaints of the weak that one must judge such conduct; any judgment made thus would necessarily be flawed, since it borrows only the ideas of the weak: one must judge the action by the power of the strong, by the extent to which he has exercised that power, and, when its effects have been exerted upon a woman, then examine what a woman is, and how that contemptible sex has been regarded, whether in antiquity or in our own times, by three quarters of the peoples of the earth.

“Now, what do I see when I proceed coolly with this examination? a wretched creature, always inferior to man, infinitely less ingenious, less wise, formed in a manner repugnant, wholly opposed to what can please her master... to what ought to delight him, an unhealthy being three quarters of her life, incapable of satisfying her husband during all the time nature compels her to childbearing, of a sour, peevish, imperious temper, a tyrant if rights are granted her, base and groveling if she is restrained; but

always false, always wicked, always dangerous, in short a creature so perverse that it was very seriously debated at the Council of Mâcon, during several sessions, whether this bizarre being, as distinct from man as the wild ape is from man, could claim the title of human creature, and whether it could reasonably be granted her. But is this merely an error of our age? and was woman better regarded in those that preceded it? Did the Persians, the Medes, the Babylonians, the Greeks, the Romans honour this odious sex, which we dare today to make our idol? Alas! I see it oppressed everywhere, everywhere rigorously excluded from affairs, debased, shut up everywhere; women, in a word, generally treated like animals, used at the moment of need, and then immediately shut back into the fold. Shall I pause a moment at Rome? I hear the wise Cato cry out to me from the heart of the ancient capital of the world: 'If men were without women, they would still converse with the gods.' I hear a Roman censor begin his oration with these words: 'If it were possible for us to live without women, we would then know true happiness.' I hear the poets singing upon the theaters of Greece: 'O Jupiter! what reason compelled you to create women! could you not give being to mankind by wiser and better means, by measures, in short, that would have spared us this scourge?' I see this same people, the Greeks, hold this sex in such contempt that laws are needed to compel a Spartan to propagate, and that one of the punishments in those wise republics is to force a criminal to dress as a woman—that is to say, to clothe him as the vilest and most despised being they know."

"But, without seeking examples in ages so remote from ours, in what light is this unfortunate sex regarded even now upon the surface of the globe? how is it treated there? I see it shut up throughout all Asia, there serving as a slave to the barbarous caprices of a despot who abuses it, torments it, and makes a sport of its sufferings. In America, I see peoples naturally humane (the Eskimos), practicing among men every possible act of benevolence, and treating women with every imaginable harshness; I

see them humiliated, prostituted to strangers in one part of the world, serving as currency in another. In Africa, still more degraded perhaps, I see them performing the labor of beasts of burden, tilling the earth, sowing it, and serving their husbands only on their knees. Shall I follow Captain Cook in his new discoveries? Will the charming island of Otaheite, where pregnancy is a crime that sometimes costs the mother her life, and almost always her child, present me with happier women? In other islands discovered by that same navigator, I see them beaten, oppressed by their own children, and the husband himself joining his family to torment them with greater severity. The closer peoples are to nature, the more faithfully they follow its laws. A woman can have with her husband no relation other than that of a slave to her master; she has, in truth, no right to claim more valued titles.

“Be that as it may, my friends, all the peoples of the earth have enjoyed the most extensive rights over their women: some have even condemned them to death from the moment they were born, preserving only the small number necessary for the reproduction of the species. The Arabs known as the Koreish buried their daughters, from the age of seven, on a mountain near Mecca, because a sex so vile seemed to them, they said, unworthy to see the light: the women in the seraglio of the king of Achem, for the mere suspicion of infidelity, for the slightest disobedience in the service of the prince’s pleasures, or as soon as they inspire disgust, are condemned to the most dreadful punishments; the king himself serves as their executioner. On the banks of the Ganges, they are obliged to immolate themselves upon the ashes of their husbands, as useless to the world once their masters can no longer enjoy them. Elsewhere, they are hunted like wild beasts; it is an honor to kill many of them. In Egypt, they are sacrificed to the gods. In Formosa, they are trampled underfoot as soon as they are pregnant. The Germanic laws imposed only a fine of ten crowns upon one who killed a foreign

woman; nothing at all if it were his own, or a courtesan. Everywhere, in a word, I repeat it, everywhere I see women humiliated, abused, sacrificed to the superstition of priests, to the barbarity of husbands, or to the caprices of libertines; and what is most unfortunate for them is that the more they are studied, the more they are analyzed, the more one becomes convinced that they are deserving of their fate. 'Is it possible,' cry their foolish defenders, 'that the opponents of this sex will not open their eyes to the merits with which it abounds? See,' they say with enthusiasm, 'the touching care it bestows upon our youth, its complaisance in our mature years, all the assistance it gives us when we grow old; how it serves us in our illnesses, how it consoles us in our afflictions; what delicacy it shows in relieving our sufferings; what art it employs to avert, if it can, the calamities that beset us; what eagerness to dry our tears... And you do not cherish, you do not adore beings so perfect? such tender friends given by nature?' No, I neither cherish nor adore them; I remain firm in the face of illusion, and my reason knows how to resist it; I see nothing but weakness, fear, and selfishness in all that you have just praised. If, like the she-wolf or the bitch, woman nurses her offspring, it is because that secretion, dictated by nature, becomes indispensable to her health; if she is useful to us in the various troubles we have described, it is by temperament far more than by virtue; it is through pride or self-love. Let us not be surprised at her motives: the weakness of her organs, rendering her more susceptible than we to the timid sentiment of pity, inclines her mechanically, and without any merit on her part, to pity and console the sufferings she sees, and her natural cowardice leads her to give to the one stronger than herself the attentions she well knows she will sooner or later require. But there is nothing virtuous, nothing disinterested in all this; nothing, on the contrary, but what is personal and mechanical; it is a revolting absurdity to attempt to construct virtues out of her needs, and to seek elsewhere than in her debility and her fears the motives for those fine actions of which our blindness makes us the dupes;

and because I have the misfortune to live among a people still coarse enough not to be able to nourish themselves on these great principles... not to dare abolish the most ridiculous of prejudices, I should deprive myself of the rights that nature accords me over this sex! I should renounce all the pleasures that arise from those rights! No, no, my friends, that is not just; I shall veil my conduct, since I must; but I shall silently compensate myself for the absurd chains to which legislation condemns me; and there I shall treat my wife as it pleases me... as I find the right to do in all the codes of the universe, in my heart, and in nature."

"By God, my uncle," said Bressac, who, throughout the whole discourse, had not ceased to show a pretty little boy he held buggered how much he approved the maxims on women Gernande had just set forth, "oh! by God, I now believe your conversion impossible." — "Nor do I advise anyone to attempt it," replied the count; "the tree is too old to be bent: at my age one may take a few more steps along the road of evil... not a single one along that of good. My principles and my tastes, moreover, make my happiness; since my childhood they have always been the sole basis of my conduct and my actions: I may perhaps go further, I feel that it is possible; but to return, no. I have too much horror of the prejudices of men; I hate too sincerely their civilization, their virtues, and their gods ever to sacrifice my inclinations to them."

"Gentlemen," said the fiery Madame d'Esterval, "you have ill-treated my sex; but the sentiments I have always professed raise me too far above its weakness for me to claim the vain honor of defending it. I am, moreover, an amphibious being who, as you yourselves have decided, belongs far more to your sex than to that of women; and you must have been even better convinced of it by the energetic manner in which I lent myself to the vexations inflicted upon Madame de Gernande. I therefore assure you that I shall always wish to be a man when it comes to adopting their tastes or abandoning myself to their

passions.” — “And I,” said the virtuous Justine, “will flee them like wild beasts whenever I see them conduct themselves according to such cruel principles.”

As we have said, the minds of those present, far from being calmed by Madame de Gernande’s outburst, became even more agitated by this conversation. “Why,” said d’Esterval to Gernande, “do you not try your whims on the handsome young men who surround you?” — “I have done so on occasion,” replied the Count; “but as I love young men with as much ardour as I feel in hating women, it seems to me that it is really only with them that one ought to employ ferocity; if it amused you, however, my friends, you are free to try.” — “That would give me an immense hard-on,” said Bressac; my cock has been wandering in the arse of one of your young boys for the past hour, to whom, I confess, I have the greatest desire to inflict every imaginable torment;” and as Bressac, saying this, squeezed the boy’s balls harshly, the child, who was only fourteen years old, let out terrible cries and wept. “Leave this boy to us,” said d’Esterval, who had just moved closer to Bressac and was beginning to act as he did; “you have so many here that one more or less will make no difference whatsoever.” — “And what will you do with him?” said Gernande. — “A victim, certainly,” said Bressac. — “A very cruel scene, if you wish,” said d’Esterval. — “Yes,” said Dorothée, “but Justine and Madame de Gernande must absolutely be the priestesses of the sacrifice.” — “That is exactly how I understand it,” said Monsieur de Gernande, “and if my dear wife did not have in all this her little share of torment, I do not know whether you would find me so accommodating... Come, we have only to go to her.” — “Oh! monsieur,” said the gentle Justine, “do you consider madame’s condition?” — “I consider,” said Gernande, striking Justine with a violent slap, “that I shall put you in the same state as she is, if you dare to reason; learn, prudish fool,” continued the brute, “that I permit you to outdo my ideas whenever your imagination suggests it, but that, on pain of your life, I forbid you ever to attempt to cool

them.” — “Let us go to your wife, my uncle,” said Bressac; “look, it is on the end of my cock that I shall bring her the victim”; and the libertine, indeed continuing to keep the wretch impaled, led him without slackening for a moment into his aunt’s apartment, who, far from suspecting this new addition to her misfortune, was, when these villains arrived, enjoying the softness of a light sleep.

Let us veil these new orgies from the modest eyes of our readers; we still have only too many atrocities left to reveal to them; let them know only that the scene was among the bloodiest; that Madame de Gernande and Justine were forced to serve as targets, and that the pretty little Ganymede expired after four hours, having lost all his blood.<sup>15</sup>

“Where am I?” said Justine to herself at last, after some weeks, “and what service has Bressac done me in bringing me into this house! The monster! He knew well that he was making my misfortune: would he have concerned himself with me otherwise?” Thus, perpetually torn between the remorse of living amidst crime and the despair of being unable to rescue her mistress from it, the poor girl languished, exhausting her mind in contrivances, and could not succeed in finding any that might deliver them both from so many miseries and such misfortunes.

“— O Justine! you are about to see new persons arrive at this château,” said Madame de Gernande one day, who now saw clearly that the poor girl was worthy of her confidence. — “Who, madame?” — “Monsieur de Verneuil, another uncle of Bressac, your persecutor, a brother of my husband; he comes here regularly twice a year, with his wife, his son, and his daughter.” — “Ah! so much the better, madame,” replied Justine, “you will at least be at peace during that interval.” — “At peace, my dear? ah! say rather that I shall be a thousand times more tormented;

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<sup>15</sup> There is no doubt much art in thus leaving certain scenes beneath the veil; but how many eager and insatiable readers would wish to be told everything! And, good God! if one were to satisfy them, what would be left for them to imagine?



those two visits are for me nothing but periods of suffering and misfortune; it is then that all my ills redouble; it is in such moments that there is not a wretch upon the wheel whose torments are as cruel; listen to me, Justine, and I will reveal to you mysteries of iniquity that will make you shudder.

“Monsieur de Verneuil,” my dear girl, “is even more libertine than his brother—more debauched, more criminal, more ferocious; he is a raging beast who, in the grip of his passions, recognizes no restraint and who, I believe, would sacrifice the entire world if he thought it useful to his infamous pleasures. Verneuil, aged forty-five, is, as you see, his brother’s junior; he is less corpulent but more sinewy, much stronger, and possessed of a countenance a thousand times more terrifying... he is a satyr... oh yes, Justine, a satyr in every respect... what you know, my dear, is in him gigantic; it seems nature wished to compensate him for what it denied his brother; moreover, he is tireless: the villain would kill ten women. His wife, aged thirty-two, is one of the most beautiful creatures imaginable; her hair is chestnut, her supple, graceful figure resembles that of Venus herself, her eyes, full of soul and sensitivity, have an unequalled expression, her mouth perfectly formed, her flesh firm, rounded, and of admirable whiteness—her whole person, in a word, is a model of grace and delicacy; yet she must possess a remarkably robust constitution to withstand, as she has for eighteen years, the bizarre and disordered caprices to which her execrable husband subjects her daily.” — “Oh! madam, can there truly exist in the world a being more barbarous than Monsieur de Gernande?” — “You shall judge, Justine; I want you to feel the full horror of the surprise; let me finish painting for you the characters we await. Victor, Monsieur de Verneuil’s son, is sixteen years old; he is the very image of his mother—nothing could be more pretty, more fresh, more delicate, more charming; I know him but one rival in beauty... his sister Cécile, about fourteen, whom one would think the gods themselves had fashioned to give men the highest idea of their power; never was a figure more light and graceful,

a face at once sweeter and more animated... finer hair... more beautiful teeth—and Cécile, in a word, without her mother, would infallibly be deemed the most beautiful person in the world. Well then, Justine, this woman and the two beautiful children she has by her husband are each day simultaneously the victims of that monster's ferocity... Victor perhaps less than the others, for the poison of example and seduction has already too much corrupted his heart."—"Oh heavens! you make me shudder... a father corrupting his children! Alas! should I be astonished at such horrors," continued Justine, "I who saw them so long in action?"—"Ah! this," said Madame de Gernande, "will surpass all you have seen: the villain does not confine himself to the mere incest with which he defiles his household; there are far worse horrors..."—"What does he do, then?"—"The most exquisite subjects of both sexes, carefully chosen from the most opulent and distinguished classes, are the victims that his cunning and his wealth secure for his lust; he is so exacting about age that if the subject presented exceeded by even a month the seven full years he requires, he would dismiss it at once; and you can imagine, Justine, all that these children must endure with a moral and physical monster such as I have described. More than half never escape; the cruel certainty of these fatal consequences is one of the sweetest stimulants to the scoundrel's depraved lust; and I have heard him say a hundred times that he would not reach the height of his pleasure without the hope that his monstrous proportions would forever blight the bloom his ferocity destroys. Twice as rich as his brother, thanks to a very advantageous marriage he made in the islands and to various lucrative enterprises that have filled him with gold, the sums he can spend on his frightful pleasures are beyond expression. Subjects are recruited for him from every province; they are brought at great expense to his château of Verneuil, ten leagues from here, where he has long been established: some of these victims no doubt

accompany him, according to his custom; and you shall see, Justine, whether there has ever existed on earth a man more dreadful than that one."

Our unfortunate orphan, terrified by all she had just heard and yielding, as always, only to the extreme goodness of her character, went the very next morning to find the Marquis de Bressac. "Sir," she said anxiously, "we are threatened with an increase of company most dangerous for my poor mistress; are you aware of what is intended, and is it possible for you to prevent it?" — "I am informed," replied Bressac; "it is another uncle of mine, a brother of my mother like Gernande, whom I have never seen, but who is said to be very agreeable and full of wit." — "Oh, sir, all such men of wit are more dangerous than the rest... reasoning their excesses better, they abandon themselves to them with less remorse... there is no resource with them. You will soon be gathered in this château, four villains of the worst kind... horrors will be committed." — "I hope so," said Bressac; "nothing is so delightful as finding oneself among several friends of the same tastes and spirit; one shares ideas and inclinations; the desires of each are inflamed by the irregularities of the others; one outbids, surpasses, encourages—and the results are divine." — "They will be dreadful for my poor lady." — "Oh Justine! what interest do you take in that creature? when will you tire of always being the dupe of your heart? If by chance something were plotted here against my aunt, would you not, as at my mother's, risk your life to defend her? Come, renounce once and for all that goodness—or rather foolishness—that has served you so ill; become more selfish, and therefore wiser; concern yourself only with your own affairs, and cease creating for yourself endless sorrows by taking on those of others. What matters to you the life or death of that woman? What connection is there between you and her? How can you be so simple as to forge imaginary ties that can only bring you misery? Extinguish your soul, Justine, as you see us harden ours; learn to make pleasures of all that has wounded your heart; once you attain, like us, the

perfection of stoicism, you will find in that apathy a multitude of pleasures far sweeter than those you imagine spring from your fatal sensitivity. Do you think that in my youth I did not have a heart like yours? I suppressed it; and in that voluptuous hardness I discovered the source of countless excesses and delights far preferable to my former weaknesses.” — “Oh, sir, one arrives at anything by thus stifling the voice of the heart.” — “Exactly—and that is what is needed; it is only then that one truly enjoys. I have only been happy since I abandoned myself to every crime in cold blood. When my soul, still in its shell, rose only gradually to the virile pitch I have now forced upon it, I suffered in allowing it some impulses; foolish remorse disturbed it; I struggled, I made principles out of my errors—and from that moment I knew happiness. One can do what one wishes with one’s soul: philosophy tunes its springs to whatever pitch one desires; and what made us tremble in childhood becomes in maturity the object of our greatest pleasures.” — “What! sir, would you persuade me that you do not repent of the dreadful matricide you committed before my eyes?” — “Had I ten mothers, I would have sacrificed them all one after another in the same way; that crime is not yet equal to my soul—it would require others far greater to disturb it. Whatever may happen concerning the object of your fears, do not communicate them to Gernande; his heart of stone understands little of sensibility, and you would suffer for it. When Verneuil arrives, behave well toward him; be gentle, attentive, witty; carefully conceal the foolish stirrings of your heart; I shall speak well of you to him, and perhaps that acquaintance may prove advantageous.” At that moment four catamites entered Bressac’s room, putting an end to a conversation Justine was not sorry to see finished. “Stay, if you wish,” said Bressac, even as he kissed and undressed them; “though you are a woman, you will never be unwelcome at my libertine sessions; you may even serve me there...” But the modest Justine, who never witnessed such horrors unless compelled, withdrew with

a sigh, saying to herself: "O my God! what is man, once his passions enslave him; do the forests of Nubia contain beasts more ferocious than he?" She returned sadly to her mistress to report the poor success of her intervention, when one of the old women came to summon her to Monsieur de Gernande, who seemed to have something to communicate to her.

"Justine," said the fierce master of the château, "why do you not inform me of the intrigues forming here?" — "I am unaware of them, monsieur." — "Then I shall reveal them to you," replied Gernande, without the slightest change in his barbarous expression. "Know that Dorothée is madly enamoured of my wife, and has just asked my permission to spend a few hours of this morning with her; I have consented, but I wish to surprise those pleasures. You must hide me in a small cabinet near her ottoman, from whose glass panes I shall be able to see everything that shameless tribade attempts with my chaste spouse." — "But have you already tested, monsieur, what one can hear or perceive through the glass of that cabinet?" — "Indeed, yes—every day; it is there that I conceal myself to listen to the complaints she makes about me, and to delight in them."

Our heroine, who in reason could here rely only upon her obedience, immediately entered the cabinet in question with Gernande; and Dorothée, suspecting nothing, went in to Madame de Gernande, who was greatly surprised by the visit.

Madame d'Esterval, imperious, haughty, and as ferocious as her husband, and to whom full license had been granted, did not amuse herself, as one might suppose, with tender dalliance; one of the old women attended her, with orders to compel the unfortunate wife to submit to whatever the Messalina sent to her might demand. She had to obey; the stripped victim soon presented nothing but tears and charms. One can scarcely imagine the fury of Madame d'Esterval; such transports cannot be described: utterly forgetting her sex, the proud tribade abandoned herself without shame to all the excesses, all the frenzies of men; it was no longer Sappho in the arms of Damophile, but Nero

beside Tigellinus. Every masculine depravity, every passion of men, every disorder of their cruel libertinage was put into practice by this monster of debauchery and perversity; there was nothing she did not attempt, nothing she did not invent to satisfy her shameless lust, and Justine's poor mistress was more exhausted by this scene than by those imposed on her by her husband. "Ah, damnation," said Gernande, as he made Justine attend to him, "this is delicious: I have never seen anything that so inflamed me; I adore that Dorothée—had I such a woman, I would never have made her my victim... go on... make it so that my pleasure comes at the same moment as that of that wretch." Yet Gernande's desires, aroused but unsatisfied, did not reach their desired end, and Madame d'Esterval tired before the one secretly enjoying the spectacle had attained his own. Disgusted with her pleasure, she cast looks of contempt upon her victim, insulted her, repeated several times that her husband was too good to have let her live so long, disparaged the charms she had just revelled in, profaned and abused them, and departed, saying she would advise her husband to take decisive measures against so contemptible a wife.

Scarcely had Dorothée left Madame de Gernande's chamber when its master entered with Justine; and, taking his cue from the visit he had just observed, he overwhelmed his unfortunate wife with every sort of insult and threat. She defended herself as best she could: "My door was opened, monsieur," she said in tears; "one of the old women to whose care I am entrusted brought this woman to me on your behalf; it was impossible for me to resist her attempts... I would have repelled them if I could." But Gernande, who was merely looking for an excuse to cause a scene—which he thereby secured in a manner most delightful to a soul as false as his own—immediately ordered his wife to be bled; and the monster, thoroughly aroused by the preliminaries, pricked her at once on both arms and in the vagina; this time he did without men; Justine was enough for him, and the unfortunate woman exhausted herself from the effort of

sucking him off; the cruel beast, master of his own semen, had the art of holding back the flood until he saw his wife faint; and this session was one of the most barbaric Justine ever saw him endure.

The libertine had scarcely returned to his apartments when the sound of carriages was heard in the courtyard. It was Monsieur de Verneuil and his family: Gernande immediately had word sent to his wife—and in what a state, just heavens, was she informed of this arrival! At the same time, Justine was summoned to come and receive these new guests.

## CHAPITRE XV.

### Portraits of these characters. — Orgies of a new kind.

The first carriage was a German berlin, drawn by six horses, in which were Monsieur and Madame de Verneuil, Cécile and Victor, their children; the second was a large calèche, occupied by a very beautiful woman of forty, her daughter—a superb creature of twenty-two—and two children of this young woman, aged six and seven, both born of Verneuil. The little boy was named Lili; the young girl, Rose: it was impossible to see anything more delightful than this small pair. Two tall young men, between twenty and twenty-two, built like Hercules and as handsome as Cupid, filled the remaining seats, under the title of Monsieur de Verneuil's valets.

The ladies and children, once quickly settled in their apartments, withdrew there, while Gernande led Verneuil to d'Esterval, where Bressac had already gone to receive the visitors. "Here is a charming nephew you do not know," said Gernande to his brother; "embrace one another, my friends—when one resembles another so closely, ceremony may well be spared." Indicating d'Esterval, he continued, "The agreeable person you see there is a friend of my nephew's, who has accompanied him to my house... a man in whose home I would not advise you to sleep, for he murders all whom he entertains... Well, are you pleased with the company I provide you?" — "Delighted," replied Verneuil, embracing d'Esterval, who immediately presented his wife, assuring Verneuil that she, though a woman, was capable of holding her own with the most depraved of men. "Excellent, my



friends," said Verneuil; "with such charming society, we shall pass a few agreeable days here." At once four young attendants entered to ask whether Monsieur de Verneuil required their services. "Gladly," he answered; "the journey has heated me; for two hours I have been in a fever—come, I shall follow you, my children; these gentlemen will excuse me if I rid myself of a little excess before becoming better acquainted with them." D'Esterval added, "Allow my wife to assist you, sir; no one has more invention or resource—her imagination will please you." — "Willingly," said Verneuil; "I would not object to adding the young girl who received us—who is she?" — "It is Justine, my uncle," said Bressac, "a heroine of virtue, entirely sentimental, whose character and misfortunes form the most singular contrast with our principles. Gernande has made her my aunt's companion; they weep, pray, and console one another together—and we make sport of it all." — "Ah, delightful—delightful indeed! By heaven, my brother, have that girl brought to me—I shall make use of her." Bressac replied, "If you were to go to Madame de Gernande's rooms, it might be better; all the objects likely to please you would be assembled there, and your satisfaction more complete." — "My nephew is right," said Verneuil, "but he does not know that the pleasure of making his acquaintance presses me still more." And drawing him into a cabinet, he subjected him to a series of degrading familiarities before returning to the company and lavishing extravagant praise upon him. "See what a state he has put me in," he exclaimed boastfully; "I would defy heaven itself now, if it stood before me. Come, my brother, let us go to your wife; I shall bring with me Madame," he added, speaking of Dorothée, "that young girl you call Justine, and two attendants—that will suffice. I am ready, as you see; it will take but the slightest effort—come, let us go." — "Will you breakfast first?" asked Gernande. "No—we had just left the table when we arrived; I have more need to excite my imagination than to eat—we shall repair afterward whatever I may expend."

Justine, sent by her master to Madame de Gernande's, came to inform Monsieur de Verneuil that, despite her mistress's state of exhaustion—having lost six pints of blood less than an hour earlier—she was, at her husband's behest, prepared to receive the visitors who had been announced. "Ah, ah! Have you just bled her?" asked Verneuil. "So much the better; I love to see her in that state. Come closer, young lady," he continued, lifting Justine up to grasp her buttocks, "come; I shall be very pleased to see your arse too; I believe it is rather pretty. Gentlemen," he continued, addressing Gernande, Bressac and d'Esterval, "I invite you, in the meantime, to visit my wife; forgive me if I do not introduce you to her; but rest assured of her submission; I urge you not to feel any more self-conscious in my home than I shall in yours."

"Well then!" said Verneuil, entering Madame de Gernande's room, supported by his attendants, followed by an old woman, and in a state of the utmost indecency, "you are forever displeasing my brother? He never ceases to bring me complaints against you, and I never arrive except to help him bring you to reason. Here is madame," he continued, indicating Dorothée, "who, as witness to your misconduct, has just assured me of things that should earn you the cruellest punishments, if my brother, less inclined to indulgence, listened a little more to justice. Come—undress yourself." And Justine, obeying the order, in an instant exposes her modest mistress to the brazen gaze of this scoundrel. "Put yourselves both in the same state," said Verneuil, addressing Justine and Dorothée, "and, above all, cover your vaginas. As for you, my lovely children," he continued, speaking to the young men, "take off only your breeches; the rest of your clothes adorn you rather than harm you, so you may keep them; I love everything that reminds me of a sex I idolise: if women wore men's clothes, I might not make them take them off." Everyone obeyed; only Justine offered any resistance; but a terrifying glance from the most dreadful and repulsive man she had ever seen quickly made up her mind. Verneuil positions Justine and

Madame de Gernande, both kneeling on the edge of the sofa, their backsides turned towards him, and leaves them there for a moment whilst he examines Dorothée's arse: "Damn it!" he says to her, "Madame, you're made for painting... it's the body of a handsome man; I'm madly in love with the hair that shades it, I kiss it with real pleasure... I adore the brown of your arsehole... it shows it's been well-used... spread it, so I can put my tongue in; oh! how wide you are... how I value this authentic proof of the depravity of your morals... do you like being sodomised? you adore a cock in your arse... that is all there is to it, madam... that is all there is; here is my arse, which I offer you, it is just the same... it is exceedingly wide..." and Dorothée, licking Verneuil's arse with delight, was amply repaying him for the cunnilingus she had received. "You please me immensely, madam," continued Verneuil, "all that remains for you to do to completely turn my head is to accept the proposal I am about to make to you, and without your consent to which all your art might not succeed in making my semen spurt. You are rich, they say, madam; well, in that case, I must pay you; if you were poor, I would steal from you. In the opposite circumstance, you must prostitute yourself to me only for a very large sum; you must conceal this condition from your husband, and assure me that the sum I am about to give you will be used by you solely for licentious expenses; above all, you must swear to me that not a single coin will be spent on good deeds... that you will pay for nothing, in short, but crime. What do you say to my passion?" — "It is peculiar, sir; but believe me, I have enough philosophy not to be surprised by any: I accept your proposals; for my part, I shall take a thousand times more pleasure in amusing myself with you, and I give you my most solemn oath to spend your money only on debauchery." — "On infamies, madam, on infamies." — "On whatever is most hideous, I swear to you." — "Well then! Madam, here are five hundred louis; are you satisfied?" — "No, sir, that is not payment. — "Ah! Delightful! Divine! Enchanting!" cried Verneuil, "here are a thousand more, and you are the most charming woman I

have ever known in my life!... Ah! Whore, I triumph, and you are mine now... Let's fuck, wank my cock, whilst I work this bitch's arse... you, victims, stay before my eyes... What's this! Madam, something is pushing back this handkerchief; I thought I was covering just a cunt, but I discover a cock. Fuck! What a clitoris... Remove, remove this veil; far more man than woman, I am permitted this illusion: you need hide nothing." And the lecher stroked and sucked that protuberance, majestic enough to put its owner in a position to successfully fulfil all the roles of a man. "You must be a libertine of the highest order, madam," continued Verneuil; "you must share all our tastes"; and as he spoke, he thrust three fingers into her arse, the electric effect of which immediately raised that clitoris to such a degree that Dorothée wanted to fuck a young lover. Verneuil assists in the endeavour, and slaps the Messalina's buttocks vigorously just as she acts: "Do you want me to molest you?" he says to her. "I do not ask this of the victims... but of you." — "Do whatever you please with my arse," says Dorothée; "it is offered to you only to endure everything." Verneuil then pinches her buttocks with such cruel force that the whore comes instantly. "Well then!" he continues, seeing her faint, "you must admit that only torment can hasten ejaculation? Whether priest or victim, I know of no other way to achieve the goal." — "And those arses," said Dorothée, "those arses you've put there—are you not going to do anything with them?" — "The state I'm going to put them in will soon prove the contrary," said Verneuil; and, approaching them: "Let's see," he said, "which of these two women will be the bravest." At the same time, he pinched, simultaneously and cruelly, Madame de Gernande's right nipple and Justine's left buttock: though her nails had dug into the flesh of the latter, she held firm. It was not the same for Madame de Gernande; the scoundrel had pinched the tip of her nipple so hard, and she was so weak to begin with, that she nearly fainted: "Oh! It's divine!" he said to Dorothée as he sucked her clitoris or her mouth, whilst still fingering her arsehole, "it's delicious! These are the

kind of orgasms I love to bits... And you, madam, do you get aroused by seeing others suffer?" — "You can see for yourself, sir," replied the lesbian, pointing to her fingertips, drenched in the cum from her cunt; "you can see that we act, I believe, on more or less the same principles." — "I repeat, madam; only pain can bring about release." And the lecher, between the two women, grew aroused, inflamed, like a bull near a heifer. "Foolish creature!" he cried, seizing his sister-in-law with one hand and grabbing with the other a whip made of knotted gut strings, which he always carried in his pocket. "You timid woman, can you not endure anything? Well then! you shall be punished for your weakness;" and placing his furious cock in Justine's hands, he orders her to stroke it, whilst Dorothée, whom he arms with a second whip, goes to give her arse what he is ready to do to his sister-in-law's, and the young men expose their buttocks to his gaze. The operation begins. The whip, wielded both actively and passively, was one of Verneuil's greatest passions; for twenty-three minutes on end his vigorous arm lashed out at the Germande's beautiful bottom; she is torn, from the middle of her lower back down to her heels; she is given her due; blood spurted from all sides: nothing was as singular as this mixture of invectives on one side, and moans and cries on the other. Too preoccupied with her task to heed the voice of her heart, the unfortunate Justine shook, as best she could, the enormous instrument entrusted to her care, without daring to ask for her mistress's mercy; it was not that she would not have turned away those terrible blows, had she believed she could; but the inflexibility of the villains' souls was becoming all too familiar to her for her to attempt to soften this one. Verneuil, however, notices his wanker's clumsiness: "What on earth is this little whore?" he says, seizing her. "Ah! Bitch, I'll teach you if this is how you wank a cock like mine;" and handing it back to Dorothée, he relies solely on her to know how to increase or decrease the titillations of pleasure as required, whilst, with heavy lashes of the whip, the

scoundrel excessively abuses the sweet and delicate buttocks of our charming Justine.

None of the instruments with which she had been scourged in the course of his libertine excesses had tormented her as much as this one; each stroke, cutting at least a line into the flesh, left, along with a dreadful pain, marks as bloody as if a knife had been used. In an instant she was covered with wounds; Verneuil then fastened his two victims together, binding them breast to breast, and, still urged on by Dorothée, applied a second flogging, striking with all his strength, now upon one, now upon the other. Here Madame de Gernande, weakened by the blood-lettings of the morning, staggered, lost consciousness, and fell, dragging Justine down with her; both lay upon the floor, bathed in the blood their tormentor had drawn. Verneuil immediately cut their bonds and, throwing himself upon his sister-in-law, contrived to restore her to life by means of a new torment, which, natural though it may be, tore that unhappy woman all the more cruelly by reason of the shocking disproportion between her and her aggressor. "Whip me! whip me!" he cried to Dorothée; "set Justine upon my back, and lash us both!" Thoroughly served by Dorothée—and perhaps even more by the monstrous excess of his actions—the vile satyr foamed, blasphemed, and at last gave himself over in loud cries, proving to all around him that, if nature had endowed him more abundantly than his brother, she had likewise granted him both a greater force and a more violent intensity of sensation.

"Well then, madame," he said to Dorothée, "how do you find me in libertinage?" — "Superb, monsieur," she replied, "though I did not think you indulged in women." — "I indulge in everything, my angel—everything; and so long as my monstrous force wounds or rends, what it falls upon is all the same to me."

"But you prefer that vice nonetheless?" — "Would you insult me by doubting it?" — "Must I, to convince you, take one of these boys?" — "No," replied Dorothée, "it is I you must take, if you wish to persuade me: here I am, monsieur—do it." And the

libertine, ever inflamed, was soon fully engaged. "Torment those two women while I am thus occupied with you, madame, I beg you," said Verneuil; and the woman, without needing to be urged twice, drove her hooked nails with delight into the flesh of both Madame de Gernande and Justine, even as she was taken; both aggressors reached their climax while the victims wept, and each, in the moment of release, bit to the point of blood the tongue of the attendant he had been using to excite himself.

"That will do for now, madame," said Verneuil to Dorothée; "you are a charming creature—I wish that we may renew our pleasures." — "I shall let you taste them in every variety, monsieur," replied Dorothée; "the better we come to know one another, the better we shall suit each other—I flatter myself of it."

Both of them returned to rejoin the company. Justine alone remained with her mistress.

The other participants had not remained inactive during the scene that had just taken place; but, less eager than Gernande's brother and less pressed by the need for release, they were still only at the preliminaries when Verneuil and Dorothée joined them. D'Esterval, Bressac, and Gernande were in Madame de Verneuil's room; the three scoundrels had made the poor woman undress without giving her time to recover from the journey. The ferocious Gernande was persuading his sister-in-law that a bleeding would be very necessary and would serve to refresh her. They were about to proceed when the actors whose exploits we have just described entered Madame de Verneuil's chamber. This beautiful woman, already naked, convinced those among the men who did not yet know her that no more sublime creature existed on earth: not a single flaw in her proportions, and all the freshness and grace of the very goddess of beauty; yet such claims to indulgence and universal admiration earned Gernande's sister-in-law only greater insults and contempt from these libertines, and especially from her husband's brother. After the most thorough examination of this superb woman's

beauties, the insults and ill-treatment began: Bressac and d'Esterval showing her no more mercy than Gernande, the wretched victim was in turn pinched, bitten, and slapped; the fine flesh of her throat and buttocks was bruised in over twenty places; she was forced to offer up in turn her mouth, her cunt, her arse: Gernande seized her mouth; Bressac entered her arse, and d'Esterval her cunt; Vemeuil thrust into Dorothée, and came a third time, whilst fondling the buttocks of his nephew, whom he never ceased to extol and raise to the heavens.

"Let us dine now, my friend," said Verneuil to his brother; "it is time to restore our strength. Drunkards, they say, make acquaintance only with a glass in hand; libertines must make it only in their own fashion; destiny is fulfilled—let us not complain of it." After one of the finest and most abundant meals, the company dispersed for separate walks; and Monsieur de Gernande, ordering Justine to follow him, had with her, in a garden cabinet, the conversation we are about to relate:

First he asked her for a detailed account of everything her brother had done to his wife; and as Justine spoke in general terms without going into detail, he ordered her to reveal everything with the utmost precision. Justine therefore went into detail. She complained of having been treated with as much severity as Madame de Gernande. "Now then," said her master... and the lecher revelled for a long time in this sinful and savage interrogation. "But my wife," said the wicked man, "is she not at least treated as badly?" — "Just as badly, sir." — "Ah! Well, I would be angry if my brother had spared that whore." — "So you really do hate her, sir?" — "Infinitely, Justine. I shall not keep her much longer; never in my life have I seen a woman who inspired more disgust in me; but do you know, my girl, that Verneuil is far more libertine than I?" — "That is hard to believe, sir." — It is: the divine pleasures of incest, enhanced by all those of cruelty, are dearest to his depraved soul. You cannot imagine, Justine, what his favourite pleasure is?" — "Children, the whip... horrors." — "All that is merely incidental; incest, I tell you, my



daughter, is my brother's sweetest pleasure. Tomorrow, you shall see him wallowing in this crime in five or six different ways. That beautiful creature whom you take for Madame de Verneuil's chambermaid, who is about forty years of age... Well then! Justine, she is one of our sisters, an aunt of Bressac's, the sister of his mother whose death—caused by her own son—you mourned for so long. Ours is a family of Oedipus, my dear Justine; there is not a single kind of crime of which one might not find an example here. We lost our parents at a very young age; wicked people even claimed that this was not without our having played a part in it; in truth, that might well be the case; we indulged in so many pranks... that this one might well be among them. We had three sisters: the first, who was already settled before the death of our parents, is the one Bressac took; the second perished as a victim of our misdeeds; the third is the one you see; we stole her birth from her. Raised as a girl destined for service, my brother, upon marrying, placed her near his wife; she is called Marceline; the young lady whom you likewise take for a lady-in-waiting to Madame de Verneuil is the daughter of Marceline and my brother, which makes her both his niece and his daughter. She is the mother of the two little children you admired, who also owe their birth to my brother. Both, as you believe, are still virgins, and it is here that Verneuil wished for them to lose their virginity; so that, by taking the little girl, he will have in her at once a daughter, a granddaughter, and a niece. Nothing amuses him more than the shattering, the overturning of all these fanciful ties; their breaking is for him the greatest of pleasures; not content merely to strike at them in their natural fruits, he shatters them just as much in his legitimate children.” — “I knew it, sir.” — But, Justine, you must see how he is raising his son, how he is making him, following his example, turn all our social institutions upside down... You will see how this child treats his mother, how he has already trampled underfoot all religious and moral prejudices; he is a delightful subject, I adore him; I wanted to sleep with him tonight, but his father wants

him to rest for tomorrow.” — “For tomorrow, sir?” — Yes, tomorrow we’re celebrating a great feast; it’s my wife’s birthday; perhaps we’ll want the Fates to cut the thread at the end of the spindle... Who knows? God himself—that God whose fabulous existence you believe in—would not be able to unravel... would not be able to guess the whims of scoundrels like us.” — “Oh! Sir,” said Justine anxiously, “if only I were fortunate enough that you could do without me in the orgies you were planning! Will you not have enough people, and am I not utterly useless to you?” — “No, no, your sweet virtue is essential to us; it is only from the mingling of this charming quality with the vices we shall set against it that the most sensual pleasure must arise for us; your tender and dear mistress, moreover, will need your help... You must be there, Justine... It is absolutely essential.” — “Oh! What a chore, sir... to take part in such infamies!... Do you realise that there are none more appalling than those in which Monsieur deVerneuil indulges?... to corrupt his own family in this way!” — “May I ask you, Justine, what a family is? What is meant by those sacred bonds that fools call the ties of blood?” — “Is an answer even needed to such a question, sir? And can there be a single soul in the world who does not know and respect these ties?” — “Such a being exists, my child, and I am that being; be thoroughly convinced, I beg you, that nothing is as absurd as these so-called ties; convince yourself that we owe no more to those from whom we derive our life than they can possibly owe us.” — “Sir,” replied Justine sharply, “spare me whatever you might say on this subject; I have been lulled by these sophistries, and not one has convinced me. If incest, one of the greatest crimes a man can commit, forms the basis of your brother’s pleasures, he is, and always will be, in this respect, the most atrocious and most guilty being in my eyes.” — “Incest, a crime! Ah! my child, tell me, I beg you, how can an act that is the law in half the world be considered criminal in the other half? In almost all of Asia, and in most of Africa and America, people openly marry their father, son, sister, mother, and so on;

and what sweeter union than that, Justine! could there be to strengthen the bonds of love and nature? It was out of fear that families, by uniting in this way, might become too powerful, that our laws in France have made incest a crime; but let us be careful not to confuse, and let us never take for the laws of nature, what is merely the fruit of politics. Even if I were to adopt your social systems for a moment, I ask you, Justine, how could nature possibly oppose such unions! Do they not strengthen the very bonds that, according to you, nature imposes upon us? Can there be anything more sacred in her eyes than the mingling of blood? Ah! Let us take great care, Justine, lest we blind ourselves to what nature dictates to us in this regard; and these sentiments of brotherly or filial love, when they are expressed between the sexes, are nothing but lustful desires: if a father or a brother, idolising his daughter or sister, were to look deep into his soul and scrupulously examine what he feels, he would see that this pious tenderness is nothing other than the desire to fuck; let him therefore yield to it without restraint, and he will soon feel what delights voluptuousness will bestow upon him. Now, I ask you, whose hands, whose hands prepare for him this abundance of pleasures? If not those of nature. And if they are his own, is it reasonable to say that these actions might irritate him? Let us therefore double, triple these incestuous acts as much as we can, without fear; and the more closely the object of our desires belongs to us, the more charms we shall have to enjoy.”

“That is how you justify everything, you men of wit,” replied Justine; “but if your unhappy intellect excuses your passions in this world, it will no longer have so indulgent an advocate on that terrible day when you must appear before the supreme Master of the Universe.” — “You preach in the wilderness, Justine,” answered Gernande, “and you oppose nothing but commonplaces to truths that admit of no reply; go and see whether my attendants are ready; bring them to my apartment; I shall withdraw there shortly; go, and prepare your tender conscience

and your lofty principles to witness tomorrow some astonishing excesses.”

Madame de Gernande, anxious and exhausted, was awaiting Justine in order to ask her for some details about what was being prepared for the following day. Our heroine felt she ought to conceal nothing from her. “Ah!” said the unhappy wife, shedding a torrent of tears, “tomorrow may well be the last day of my life; I must expect everything when such barbarians are brought together. O Justine, Justine! how dangerous upon this earth are those without morals, without delicacy, without principles!”

Meanwhile, everyone made their arrangements for the night, each believing they would find, in the midst of the most extreme debauchery, the strength needed to commit even greater horrors the next day. Verneuil lay with Dorothée, Gernande between two favorites, d’Esterval with Madame de Verneuil, and Bressac with one of his uncle’s valets.

From early morning, the old women had prepared the finest salon in the château; the floor was covered with a vast quilted mattress six inches thick, forming a sort of carpet upon which two or three dozen cushions were scattered. A large ottoman stood at the back of the room, surrounded by so many mirrors that the scenes about to be enacted there would be reflected in countless forms. On rolling tables of ebony and porphyry, placed here and there, appeared every implement suited to debauchery and cruelty—whips, scourges, cords, restraints of rope and iron, artificial devices, instruments, ointments, essences, and various tools of torment or destruction—everything displayed in profusion. Opposite the ottoman, at the other end of the salon, an enormous buffet was laid out symmetrically with the most sumptuous and delicate dishes, many of which could be kept warm without notice; crystal decanters mingled with fine porcelains held the rarest wines and liqueurs. An abundance of roses, carnations, lilacs, jasmine, lily of the valley, and other precious flowers completed the decoration and perfumed this temple of pleasure, where everything had been assembled so that, without

leaving the room, both sensuality and indulgence might be satisfied. At the far end, artfully arranged upon a cloud, stood the effigy of the supposed God of the universe in the form of an old man; beneath it was another ottoman displaying the symbols of various religions—Bibles, Qur'ans, crucifixes, consecrated wafers, relics, and similar objects. Six adjoining cabinets offered secluded spaces for more private amusements, along with adjoining dressing rooms furnished with conveniences; beyond, a terrace of orange trees beneath a canopy provided fresh air, bordered by a deep earthen bench whose depth might conceal, forever, whatever remains these monsters' excesses might produce—a precaution that revealed how fully they embraced their crimes. At precisely ten in the morning, the company assembled in this prepared setting, each dressed in a different costume, which we shall describe as we name each participant.

Madame de Verneuil appeared there, dressed in the manner of the sultanas of Constantinople; no adornment, without doubt, could have better enhanced her beauty.

Cécile, his charming daughter, was dressed in brown, in the traditional costume of the marmots of the Barcelonette Valley. One can scarcely imagine the admiration she aroused in that outfit.

The attributes of Love adorned the young Victor.

Marceline was dressed as a savage.

Her young daughter Laurette could be seen there wearing nothing but a simple smock of unbleached gauze, tied gracefully at the hips and over her left breast with thick swathes of lilac ribbon; one of her nipples and half of her buttocks were thus revealed: leading her two pretty, almost naked children by the hand, she resembled the goddess of youth, surrounded by games and laughter.

Madame de Gernande appeared there in the evocative costume of the victims once sacrificed in the temple of Diana; she might have been taken for Iphigenia.

Justine was dressed as a soubrette; her bare arms, gracefully crowned with roses, and her pretty figure well displayed.

Dorothée saw herself clad in the robe with which painters typically depict Proserpina. This garment, much like her character, was made of satin, the colour of fire.

Gernande's six most handsome young lovers were brought in, dressed as Ganymede.

Dressed as Hercules and Mars, John and Constant, Verneuil's two valets, appeared.

He, along with Esterval, Bressac and Gernande, appeared there, clad in red silk trousers that clung tightly to their skin and enclosed them completely from the nape of the neck down to their feet. A round opening, artfully cut out at the front and back, left their buttocks and genitals exposed; they were heavily made up in red, and wore a light pink turban on their heads; they resembled furies.

Four women in their sixties, representing Spanish matrons, were admitted for the inner service, and the session began. Everyone stood, forming a semicircle, when the masters appeared in the room. They knelt as soon as they saw them. Dorothée stepped forward to them and said:

"Illustrious and magnificent lords, all those you see here are gathered only to obey your commands: the deepest submission, the most complete resignation, the utmost attentiveness—these are what you will find in all. Command, then, your slaves, sovereign masters of this place; give your orders, and you will see them instantly bow into the dust to await your will, or hasten to anticipate it. Multiply your desires, exalt your inclinations, set no limits upon your passions; our faculties, our existence, our means, our lives—everything belongs to you; you may dispose of all. Be fully persuaded of the tranquillity you will enjoy here: there is no mortal in the world who would dare disturb your pleasures, and all around you will be occupied only in rendering them more intense. Break, then, through every barrier; respect no restraint: it is not beings as powerful as you who can or should be

bound by the petty prejudices of the common people; there are no laws in the universe but yours; you are the only gods who ought to be adored. With a single word you may destroy us; with a gesture reduce us to dust; and even then, our final breath would still be to exalt you, cherish you, and revere you.”

Dorothée bends down at these words, sucks the four cocks, asks permission to rim the four arses; then she withdraws silently to await further instructions.

“My friend,” said Gernande to her brother, “this celebration is in your honour; it is therefore up to you to take charge here; my nephew, no doubt, will agree; and our friend d’Esterval, to whom we shall one day entrust the reins of government, will kindly yield them to you today.” Everyone applauded, and Verneuil, invested with supreme authority, took his place accordingly on a sort of throne, set upon a platform covered with a crimson velvet carpet edged with gold fringe. As soon as he is seated, the women, girls, children, boys and old women come humbly to present their behinds for him to kiss, after first genuflecting three times. Upon leaving Verneuil’s hands, they passed successively into those of the three other friends, seated in the armchairs surrounding the throne; and there, each did much as he pleased with the object that approached him. “If, during this first round,” said Verneuil, “you feel like subjecting some of the objects that will be offered to you to more vigorous treatment, so as not to disrupt the order, you shall immediately go and shut yourself away in a private room; and, once your passion has been appeased, you shall bring the object back into the circle;” Bressac is the first to take advantage of the warning; he cannot see the charming buttocks of Victor, his little nephew, in the open without desiring to go further; he leads him into one of these boudoirs, whilst d’Esterval, enthralled by Cécile, is about to subject her too to the first flames of his passion: Gernande does the same with Laurette; Verneuil goes off with Marceline, followed by her two small children; and Dorothée, to whom all the privileges of men had been granted, goes to shut herself away with Constant.

“My friends,” said Verneuil, resuming his place, “since the public avowal of the pleasures in which one has indulged can only inflame the general ardor of desire, I require that each of you give an account aloud, and in the greatest possible detail, of all the excesses into which you have just plunged. Speak, Gernande—your friends will follow you; above all, remember to cast aside all veils, to depict everything plainly, and to employ the most precise terms. Let virtue be veiled, if you will; but let crime always appear in full view.”

Gernande stands up. “I locked myself in,” he says, “with Laurette; I sucked her mouth and her arsehole; she sucked my cock whilst I licked her armpits; I sucked her bruised arms, I gave her six slaps on the stomach—you can see, I believe, the marks; she fucked my arse, and I forced her to finger my arsehole.” — “Did you get a hard-on? — “No.” — “Were the pangs of pleasure intense?” — “Mediocre.” — “Did your imagination run wild with stronger thoughts?” — “Oh! I longed for some truly awful ones.” — “Why did you not indulge in them?” — They would have taken the subject away from society; I wanted to let society enjoy it.” — “Throw yourself at Gernande’s feet, Laurette, and thank him for his kindness...” Laurette obeys; and it is Bressac’s turn to reply.

“I locked myself in with Victor,” he said; “I shoved it in his mouth, I sucked his tongue just as my cock was leaving his lips; I fingered his arse, and I sodomised him.” — “Did you work on his morals?” — “Infinitely; there are no virtues I have not destroyed, no vices I have not made him cherish.” — “How intense was the pleasure for you?” — “Very intense.” — “Did you ejaculate?” — No. — “Did you wish to do worse?” — “Certainly.” — “Did you swear a great deal whilst doing so?” — “A great deal.” — “Did your cock emerge clean or filthy from the young man’s anus?” — “It came out covered in shit.” — “Why didn’t you make him suck it?” — “I did.” — “Did you suck his mouth afterwards?” — “Yes.” — “What state is your cock in?” — “You can see, it’s hard.” — “Have a young boy tend to it.”



“To you, d’Esterval.” — “I fingered Cécile’s cunt, thrust my cock into it, and came back to suck up the cum that this attack had made her squirt; I sucked her mouth, I fucked her arse, on which you can see the marks of six fairly hard slaps.” — “Did you bugger her?” — “No, I was sparing her.” — “Did you fancy her arse?” — “Yes.” — “Did you come?” — “No.” — “Did you get turned on by this young girl?” — “Surprisingly so.” — “Did she fuck your arse?” — “She stuck her tongue in it.” — “Did you put your cock in her mouth?” — “Several times.” — “What state is your cock in?” — “It’s stiff.” — “Choose someone to support you.”

“It’s your turn, Dorothée.” — “I got fucked by Constant.” — “Did he put it up your arse?” — “Yes.” — “Was he really hard?” — “Absolutely.” — “Did he come?” — “No.” — “So where did he get rid of his cum?” — “I swallowed it.” — “Did you fuck his arse?” — “Yes.” — “Did he suck your clit?” — “I put it in his arse.” — “Did you want more?” — “Oh! A hundred times over.”

“Now it’s my turn, my friends,” said Verneuil, standing up. “You saw me walk past with my sister Marceline, accompanied by her two little children, the fruit of my incest with my sister’s child: well then! Marceline whipped me, I fucked my grandchildren’s arses, I put my cock between their thighs, and I sodomised my sister. — “Did you come?” asked Gernande. — “No.” — “Did you get your arse fucked?” — “Yes.” — “Did anyone suck your cock?” — “Yes.” — “Was your semen spilled?” — “No.” — “What did your mind wander to?” — “To horrors.” — “Do you promise to carry them out?” — “Certainly.” — “Come now, said Verneuil, let us attend to more serious matters. Each of us must... (Dorothée, you will always be counted among the men; you are worthy of it); each of us, I say, must go and write on this table whatever lewd desire we have, and sign it. These five notes will be placed in a chalice to be held by one of the old women. Ten individuals whom I shall designate will draw, in pairs, each of these notes. Each couple will be assigned to the signatory of the note drawn by that couple, and will satisfy the passion set out in

that note. Chance alone will determine the treatment to be inflicted upon that couple, which must always be violent enough to make the person undergoing it scream.

“Madame de Gernande and her faithful Justine shall draw the first note.

“Madame de Verneuil and Laurette, the second.

“Marceline and Lili, the third.

“Cécile and Rose, the fourth.

“One of the old women, and the prettiest of the young lovers, shall draw the fifth.

“You will note that I have excluded Victor; the dispositions you shall soon recognise in him render him more worthy of being among the agents than in the class of the patients.”

The five slips are written, an old woman tosses them into a chalice, and, taking their places on the ottoman at the foot of the symbol of the Supreme Being, each couple comes forward in turn to draw, and is obliged to read aloud the lot that has fallen to them.

D’Esterval expressed a desire to pinch the buttocks hard, to bite the arseholes and the clitorises. Madame de Verneuil and Laurette fell to him.

Bressac declared that he would sodomise... that he would pinch the nipples, and that he would deliver vigorous slaps. Madame de Gernande and Justine were immediately handed over to him.

Dorothée will prick the most sensitive parts of the body with a pin, and will defecate on both faces. The old woman and the young lover are assigned to her.

Gernande declares that he will make six light pricks on each person with his lancets and that he will be sucked off. Cécile and Rose make up his lot.

Verneuil announces that he will flog them until they bleed. Marceline and Lili belong to him.

It was at the foot of the sofa, placed near the emblem of God, that the Fates were consulted; it is on this very sofa that the fates

will be fulfilled. They carry out their tasks, and Bressac is the only one who cannot fulfil them without losing his cum; it is deep inside Justine's arse that he spews it out, whilst he spansks poor Madame de Gernande so cruelly that tears stream from her eyes. These various scenes had already, as one might well imagine, caused all clothing to vanish, and nothing but nakedness remained to be seen.

"It is upon my wife now," cried Monsieur de Verneuil; "yes, my friends, it is upon her that the torments must fall. John, and you, Constant, stretch this wretched woman out on the floor upon these piles of tiles, and let each of you at once impose upon her whatever kind of torment your perfidious imagination may devise. And you, Cécile—my daughter and hers—take your place upon the sacred ottoman (so was called the one set at the foot of the image of the Good Lord); the pleasures your charms are about to provide shall serve as a reward to your mother's executioners. I shall set the prizes and distribute them according to the zeal with which my wife has been abused. Victor, take your place beside Cécile, so as to offer more delicate pleasures to those who prefer your sex." Then, pointing to his wife on one side, and his two children on the other: "Courage, my friends," he cries; "here is the victim, and here is the reward." Marceline is beside him, she is wanking him, two young lovers offer him their arses. "Let us begin."

Gernande takes the lead, and her treacherous lancet makes fifteen shallow incisions into the beautiful flesh of the unfortunate woman offered up to his fury; he throws himself upon Victor and has him suck him off.

Dorothée follows, and squeezes Madame de Verneuil's breasts so hard that she causes her terrible convulsions; she throws herself upon Cécile, and the tribade squirts right in her face.

D'Esterval follows his wife; he plucks Madame de Verneuil's pubic hair and pricks the lips of her cunt until they bleed; Victor's anus consoles him; he comes there to discharge himself. Bressac caresses his aunt with heavy blows to the nose; she bleeds

from them; he sodomises her... He pulls her ears until the skin splits, and returns, like d'Esterval, to sodomise the charming Victor. Verneuil approaches: one can easily believe he will show his wife no mercy; he beats her, pinches her, molests her; and it is in Cécile's beautiful arse that he immediately quenches his ardour.

"It's your turn, Victor," he said to his son; "let's see how you treat your mother; behold before your very eyes a parent who did not haggle over his own for so long: O Bressac! Encourage your nephew to follow your example one day!" Young Victor steps forward: it is his mother whom a fierce and brutal father orders him to insult; and it is his sister who will serve as his reward. Alas! The young boy lends himself all too willingly to the infamies one dares to demand; there is no need to tell him what to do. "Beautiful mother," says the little libertine, "I know what drives you to despair; allow me to take it upon myself; turn that lovely bottom towards me, so that I may enjoy it in every way that offends you most." There was no resisting it; the old women, surrounding the victim, would have restrained her at once had she dared to offer the slightest resistance. Victor, armed with a handful of rods, dares to lay a parricidal hand upon the one who gave him life. Encouraged by Gernande, Bressac, d'Esterval, and even by Dorothée herself, the monster, following Bressac's example, whips his mother with all his might. Can one believe it? Verneuil, to further excite his son, jerks him off from below, whilst holding his wife down. The young libertine, deeply moved, more beautiful than Cupid himself, despite the horrors that degrade him, cries out... "Father! Ah! Yes, yes, hold her for me; hold her tight, whilst I sodomise her." And the obliging Verneuil, gripping his wife's hips, carefully guides his son's cock into his beloved's arse: there goes Victor right to the hilt; the incest is consummated, whilst this guilty father excites and himself serves, in a thousand voluptuous ways, the lewd pleasures of this criminal son. "How shall we now claim the prize on offer?" asks Verneuil of Victor. "Will your exhaustion allow it?" — "Exhausted?" says the scoundrel, showing that the assault he has just

delivered has only sharpened his weapons; “Look, for God’s sake, at that cock; see if it isn’t in a state to do to my sister what it has just undertaken with my mother; I shall shove into the girl’s arse the shit I’ve just fished out of her mother’s arse; nothing more delicious in the world!” And throwing himself upon Cécile, he places her in the same position in which he has just placed his mother. The rascal is about to treat her in the same way, when Verneuil, halting his son’s fury, begs him to delay the course of events for a moment, to bring more order to his pleasures. Cécile, kneeling on the holy sofa, presents the double path of pleasures in full view: Verneuil prepares the way; he introduces his son to the way of Sodom. Straddling Cécile’s back, Laurette is carefully positioned, offering to the young man’s kisses in that very spot the freshest and most charming temple that Love has yet bestowed upon the earth. To the right and left, Madame de Gernande and Madame de Verneuil offer their arses for the pleasure; Verneuil sodomises his son, and John returns the favour. Bressac, d’Esterval, Gernande and Dorothée, intoxicated by this spectacle, surround him... the first sodomising a young lover, the second defiled by Marceline, whose buttocks he pinches, the third being sucked by Lili, and the fourth being sodomised by Constant. At the end of a brief encounter, with everyone having reached their goal, torrents of impure, sodomitic, incestuous semen gush forth from all sides before the eyes of the Eternal One, placed there to be insulted, and, by exhausting those who squander them, compel them to make indispensable reparations.

They gather around the buffet; the pâtés, the hams, the poultry, the partridges are carved and cut up, the bottles are uncorked, everything is devoured; but, a few moments later, the exacting goddess of Cythera summons all these followers of Cornus back to her deserted altars.

“My friends,” said Verneuil, resuming his place, “just now we consulted chance concerning our pleasures; I am now of the opinion that we should question the Eternal Being on the same subject. There he is before your eyes, that supreme God who

knows the future; I therefore order each of you to go and stand before him, with his member in hand, and to consult him by means of the formula you will find at the foot of his throne. The great Being, whose minister I am here, and from whom I received orders this morning, will answer you by a note; you will carry out its contents; you will remember that the style of a God's decrees is always somewhat obscure; you will interpret the letter; you will divine the intention, and you will act. The manner in which you have just conducted yourself, Victor, secures, more than ever, your place among us; you will therefore no longer lend yourself as a passive participant except insofar as the game pleases you. Begin, Gernande; go and consult God." Gernande, in the prescribed attitude, pronounces aloud the words he finds, and which we shall transcribe word for word.

"Contemptible image of the most ridiculous phantom; you who are fit to be placed only in a brothel; you who are good for nothing but regulating pleasures of the flesh—what must I do to become aroused again? Make it known to me; I shall carry out whatever you prescribe; but I protest that this is the only matter in which I am willing to obey you; my contempt and my hatred are too well established, too certain, for me ever to submit to you in any other respect."

Hardly has Gernande finished speaking when a roll of white satin, hurled from the mouth of the Eternal, falls at his knees; he unrolls it and reads these words: "Take your sister-in-law and Marceline, your sister; go with them into a boudoir; there you shall mingle blood and drink sperm."

Gernande immediately locks herself away. We shall not repeat that everyone else did the same as soon as they had received their decree.

Bressac follows; he reads the same formula; the scroll falls; on it were these words: "Take two catamites, and mark them."

Dorothée follows; the scroll says: "Let Gernande and Constant follow you; become at once the executioner of one, the whore of the other."

D'Esterval appears: "Take Cécile and Lili," says the scroll to him, "and spare the latter only to overwhelm the former".

Verneuil arrives: "Justine and John are yours," the scroll declares; "venture your secret with the first, and let the second avenge you if you are refused." Victor concludes: "Take two catamites," says the oracle, "and make yourself worthy of your father."

The impossibility of now following each of the characters into their private chambers means that, with our readers' permission, we shall focus only on the one among them who sets our heroine on the stage. "Justine," says Verneuil as soon as he is shut in with her, "let us send this boy into the wardrobe for a moment, and listen to me carefully. The voice of the God of the universe has just informed me that I may let you in on my secret; I shall do so; do not abuse it, and above all ensure that I have no cause to regret my trust.

"I cannot hide from you, my dear, that there is something about you that I find exceedingly pleasing; my brother finds you witty, but too prudish; cast aside that veil that detracts from your charms, renounce your foolish religious practices... of virtue, and walk with me along the thorniest path of crime; agree to come to my estates, and your fortune is made; but if you accept, you must do so with infinite courage... a self-surrender... total resignation." — "Oh! Sir, what is this about?" — "A horror; first convince yourself, my child, that there is no mortal in the world more wicked than I; there is none who takes such a taste for crime and atrocity so far; to satisfy my perverse intentions without as much risk as ordinary criminals, and to multiply my victims, through a notorious betrayal that sets all my senses ablaze, in an indescribable fervour, I use a powder that brings instant death to those who breathe it in or swallow it. This powder is extracted from the root of Addad, which grows in Africa,<sup>16</sup> though the curious may cultivate the plant themselves; the poison extracted from it is so potent that a very small dose is enough

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<sup>16</sup> In Numidia.

to bring about the swiftest and most painful death. You cannot imagine, my dear daughter, the countless number of victims who perish so treacherously at my hands; but as he who devotes himself to crime always desires more than he accomplishes, still dissatisfied with the multitude of individuals who fall by my hand, I am devising a means to extend these deeds: to succeed, I need an assistant... I have set my sights on you; armed with my infernal powder—that is the name I have given it—you would roam the cities, you would distribute this poison, and I would taste the unparalleled bliss of adding your crimes to my own, and of regarding them as my own, since they would become my handiwork.” — “What! Sir, such horrors?” — “They constitute the sweetest pleasures I can taste in the world; the act, when I give myself to it, at first irritates my senses incredibly; if I hear of it, or see its consummation, my semen escapes at once, without my needing any further aid.” — “Oh! Sir, how I pity those around you!” — “No; my wife, my children, my servants, are in no danger; they provide me with other pleasures, which I would be forced to do without were it not for them; but everything else, Justine, oh! everything else inflames me... excites me... exposes me. More ambitious than Alexander, I would wish to ravage the whole earth, to see it strewn with my corpses.” — “You are a monster; your wickedness will double because you give it free rein, and the sacred beings you deign to spare today will soon be sacrificed in turn.” — “Do you think so, Justine?” asked Verneuil, fondling the buttocks of the woman he was trying to seduce, and making her grasp his cock, which was greatly aroused by these words. “I am sure of it. And even if that were the case, my angel, would I be committing such a great evil? — “I am appalled, sir—horrificed... And would I not myself become your victim?”

“Never; you would be too precious, too necessary to me for that.”

“Ah, I should be all the more likely to be sacrificed if I had the misfortune to accept your offers. What a criminal does most



wisely is to eliminate his accomplices, and of all the horrors to which he gives himself, that one is surely the most conceivable.”

“I have only one word in reply to your objection, Justine: you would be mistress of the powder, and would then have over my life the same rights I might acquire over yours.” — “Oh, Verneuil, the only dangerous weapons are those in the hands of crime; if virtue possesses them for a moment, it uses them only to wrest them from those who might abuse them.” — “But you truly believe, my child, that there is great evil in satisfying oneself thus?” — “It is the most abominable of all horrors, because it is, of all ways of committing murder, the most treacherous and the most dangerous... the one against which one can least defend oneself.” — “Instructed by my brother,” replied Verneuil, “I shall not repeat what he, or the other philosophers with whom you have spent your life, may have told you to prove the nullity of the supposed crime called murder; I will only endeavor to make you understand that, of all the ways of proceeding, the one that sheds no blood is doubtless the least dreadful; and indeed, you will admit, Justine, that if anything repels us in the act of destroying our fellow being, it is the violence exercised upon him, the blood made to gush from his veins, in a word, the spectacle of his bruises and wounds: none of this exists in poison, no violent act; death strikes before your eyes the condemned person, without noise, without scandal; you scarcely even suspect it. O Justine, Justine! what a delightful thing poison is! what services it has rendered!... how many people it has enriched!... how many useless beings it has purged from the world!... how many tyrants it has relieved the earth of!... In cases, for example, where one must break the chains of despotism—the tyranny of a father, a husband... an unjust master—can one succeed otherwise, or more surely, than by poison? Ah! if this precious substance were not necessary to man, would nature have given it to us? Is there a single plant on earth that is useless to us, a single one whose use she does not permit at our pleasure? Let us then employ them all, without distinction, for the needs that this same nature

inspires in us; let some nourish us and strengthen our forces; let others free us from humours whose excess would harm our health; let still others rid us of individuals who harm us or burden us; all this is in its place, all this is in order: nature offers it and prescribes it at once; only fools, unwilling to understand her, reject or misinterpret her.”

“But, sir,” said Justine, “your brother never spoke to me of such horrors.” — “They are not his fancies,” replied Verneuil; “he has another way of doing harm and confines himself to that; each offends the laws, religion, and social conventions in his own fashion, and tastes are not to be disputed.” — “Well then, sir, I pity you for having such tastes, and I declare at the same time that I shall never serve them.” Unhappy girl, she did not know how much her refusals inflamed that infamous libertine; Verneuil quickly passed from lust to rage and, seeing that seduction failed, resolved to use force, commanding her to submit while she, trembling, obeyed in the hope of appeasing him, only to be met with further degradation, after which he coldly declared the pleasure he had taken and demanded she return it, threatening her with violence when she recoiled in horror, to which she steadfastly replied that, whatever he might do, it was impossible for her to consent to such infamy.

John appears at once; he was armed with two pistols; he hands one to Verneuil, and both press the muzzle of the weapon they hold against one of Justine’s temples. The frightened young woman freezes in her tracks. “Hold her still,” says Verneuil to the valet, straddling our heroine’s breast, “and force her mouth open with the barrel of your pistol if she refuses willingly; show no mercy to a disobedient girl.” Alas! Everything proceeds all too well according to this vile man’s wishes. He feels with his arse whether he is positioned squarely over Justine’s face; seeing that he is perfectly aligned, he releases his load, filling the poor girl’s mouth with the most foul and disgusting substance. “That is not all,” says he, rising to contemplate his loathsome handiwork, “she must swallow it.” Justine is threatened once more: what will not

fear make one do? The unfortunate girl obeys; but her stomach immediately turns, and it is clear she is about to vomit up what she has just been forced to swallow; can one believe it? Can one form a sufficiently accurate idea of this lecher's unbridled passion to comprehend the filthiness to which he indulges? Verneuil, who, during this final act, had not ceased to be defiled by John, and to defile him in turn, the vile Verneuil presses his mouth against Justine's the moment he sees her retching, and receives into his own bowels the disgusting excess from those of the victim of his lust. "That's what I needed to get to the point," he said to John. "Come on, you whore, your arse; you know I haven't yet probed that lovely arse; I want to fuck it." Aided by John, and by the state of suffering in which Justine finds herself, the undertaking succeeds easily. However prodigious Verneuil's member may be, by virtue of the violence with which he proceeds, and Justine's inability to defend herself, the instrument soon disappears. "Right! I have her," he says, "come and sodomise me now, my dear John, come and return to me what I'm doing to this slut:" the two acts interlock, merge; but our wretched adventuress is far from foreseeing the outcome that the ferocity of this monster has in store for her: leaning on the sofa that was supporting her, her whole body weighs heavily upon it; Verneuil, master of a spring mechanism, releases it; the sofa sinks, and Justine, dragged along, breaks free from the pin holding her in place, and falls, more than twenty feet down, into a vast basin of icy water, prepared to receive her. Such is the moment of Verneuil's ejaculation; his hand finishes the job; "Oh! Goddamn it," he cries, "she's slipping away from me"; and the semen, which he would otherwise have sprayed onto the victim's arse, gushes in thick streams onto the waves where the unfortunate woman is struggling. "Order them to fish her out," says Verneuil calmly to John, who had just unloaded into his arse; "go on, for the wench might well drown, and we still need her; I'd leave her there, by Jove, if not for that."

Our man returned to the salon after this fine exploit; Gernande, Bressac, d'Esterval, Victor, and Dorothée came back there almost at the same time. Each gave an eager account of the solitary pleasures he had just enjoyed. There had not been a single cabinet where similar pranks had not been carried out; and, as all were equipped with trapdoors, each of these villains, forewarned, had made use of them in the same way. But the ambushes differed: one of Bressac's favorites—the one he had been using—had fallen into the privy, and they did not know how to get him out; Dorothée had hurled Gernande onto bundles of brambles; pretty Cécile, younger and more spared, thrown onto mattresses by d'Esterval, had escaped with only fright; Victor had let one of the boys entrusted to him fall into flames of spirits that made the poor youth think he would perish by fire; and Gernande, with Madame de Verneuil, had let her slide onto thirty lit candles, which she extinguished with her body. The victims, bathed and refreshed, reappeared, and attention turned to devising a general plan.

"I feel more in the mood than ever," said Verneuil, "the further I go down the path of lust, the harder I get; the loss of semen tires... wears out ordinary men, but it irritates me—it prepares me for new acts of lust; the more I ejaculate, the more of a libertine I become. Line up along this vast sofa, knees over the edge, and expose your backsides to me without distinction: girls, boys, women, old women—for God's sake, everyone must have a go, except these two young children," he continued, pointing to Rose and Lili; "I'm saving them for another occasion." They arrange ourselves, taking care to mix the sexes: Bressac is the first to show his backside to his uncle; Marceline was next; as soon as she received her offering, she seized a handful of rods and followed her brother, flogging him; the infernal Verneuil spared no one; he sodomised men and old women with the same ardour as the girls and boys; he finally reaches Gernande, without having reached his climax; he sodomises his brother; "You old bastard," he says to him, "if I were to unload, it would surely be in

your libertine arse; for it has been making me hard for a long time. But new pleasures beckon, and I shall save myself."

The chain breaks. "It's your turn, my son," says Verneuil to Victor, "here, look at your mother and your sisters; won't you give them a bit of a hard time? Go on, do as I do with them—sodomise all three of them." The depraved boy, led by his father, sodomises the three designated women, whilst Verneuil fucks them himself. The lecher, once again led astray, has himself flogged, and falling upon his son's three whores, he beats all three of them bloody; handing the weapon back to his pupil, "Whip your mother, flog your sisters," he tells him, "do not spare them, and above all, do not fear to outrage nature; it is only beyond the known bounds that the bitch has fixed pleasure; one grasps it fully only by exceeding the limits that fools claim she prescribes for us. No pleasures without crimes. Ah! How they toiled for our pleasures, those imbecile lawmakers who claimed to lay down laws for mankind: to give a damn about them, and to break them all, my friend, that is the only art of enjoyment. Master this art, and break all restraints." — "Papa," said the little rascal, whipping his mother with all his might, "you know I've been asking you for ages for permission to whip Mummy on the breasts; so grant me this favour, and you'll see my cock foaming at the mouth." Such fervour inflames everyone: Bressac fucks a thousand times a child so much like himself; Gernande wants his wife to join Madame de Verneuil; "as an aunt," says this libertine, "she has, it seems to me, a right to this dear nephew's intemperance." The two victims are placed on their knees, their backs pressed against the sacred sofa; and the barbaric child, whom everyone gazes at with pleasure, without reckoning the dire consequences of such a dangerous whim, strikes indiscriminately with his rods the beautiful throats exposed to his cruelties. Such a spectacle excites the assembly: Bressac sodomises Esterval, who himself sodomises a young lover; Gernande sucks the cocks of John and Constant, whilst Marceline whips him; and Dorothée, seizing Justine, thrusts her clitoris into her arse; yet Madame de

Verneuil, upon whom the rage of this little scoundrel seems to be vented with greater relish, faints under the blows dealt to her; and the monster, forgetting and desecrating the holiest law of nature, dares to spurt his cum onto the bloodied breast that gave him life.

As the day wore on and their strength began to fail, they decided, in order to restore it, to open a few more pies, uncork several bottles of champagne, and then to consult the image of God, so as to learn what means they should employ to recover the energy they would need for the final act.

With their stomachs full and their minds refreshed, Verneuil, after having made the Lord kiss his arse three times, asks him by what means he thinks one might regain a little vigour. "Through specific torments," replies the divine image; "let each man return to his private chambers and make use of the instrument he will find there. You, Gernande, take Madame de Verneuil; you, Verneuil, take your daughter Cécile; let d'Esterval take Madame de Gernande; Dorothée shall go with Laurette and Marceline; Victor, aided by Constant, shall shut himself in with Justine."

As we are compelled here to follow our heroine, we know not what torments the others were condemned to. We shall therefore simply say that our unfortunate adventuress found, in the chamber intended for her, an instrument of torture in use amongst the executioners of Italy. Strapped to the seat at the top of this infernal machine, her four limbs were bound in the air, and her body, weighing down on that sensitive and weak part supported by the fatal instrument, caused her, through this weight, such violent pain that it resulted in a sardonic laugh, which was extremely curious to observe. One cannot imagine the pleasure Victor took in having his assistant place the sad and unfortunate Justine there. The little scoundrel kept her there for nearly half an hour, whilst Constant gave him a handjob; then, running to fetch his father: "Oh! my friend," he said to him, "I know not to what torment you are condemning your daughter Cécile; but I swear to you that there can be none more delightful

than that which I have just inflicted upon Justine; come and place my sister there, I beg you earnestly." Verneuil, whom nothing satisfied, and who had not found sufficient delight in the dreadful pains wrung from Cécile by a hideous rack upon which he had placed her, untied her and led her to the Italian rack. "We must fuck them out of there," said Verneuil to his son. Both committed this final crime, nestling together, one in his daughter's cunt, the other in Justine's arse, and came at the same time, molesting the charms of both victims... already broken by the interrogation session to which these scoundrels had just subjected them.

Now was the time to make a grand gesture. Until then, the two children of Verneuil and Laurette, his daughter, had, so to speak, remained idle. The grand plans for these festive days lay in the withering of these two beautiful children's first fruits. Everything about this delightful sacrifice flattered Verneuil to the extreme: these individuals were of the youngest age, and that was just the sort of victims he needed; they were both his children and his grandchildren. What a delightful pursuit for a man whose every pleasure lay in incest! So, both were presented to his lustful enterprises: Laurette, their mother, and Madame de Verneuil, were to contain the sacrifices; Victor was charged with moistening the passages, and guiding his father's shaft along the voluptuous paths that his brother and sister were to present. Whilst waiting for everything to be prepared, Verneuil, to revive himself, enjoys the passive pleasures of Sodom: John and Constant take turns sodomising him; he wants Justine to suck his mouth and wank his cock whilst this is happening. In a few minutes our obliging heroine brings this wretched invalid of Cythera back to life; and the two best slaps she has ever received in her life become tokens of the gratitude due to her. Perfectly aroused, the fellow pounces in the same leap upon the seven-year-old girl: the first fruits of the arse are those that offer themselves first; Victor guides, with incredible dexterity, his father's terrifying member to the cute little hole shown to him; but however great

the one's skill and the other's agility, the assault seems impossible. However, the victim, perfectly restrained, can offer no resistance; her defeat thus becomes certain; indeed, it is so; and the monster, by dint of lubrication, vanishes in three thrusts into the narrow cavern of Gomorrah's pleasures. Marceline immediately takes Laurette's place in restraining the subject; to better arouse her father in the pleasures he takes in enjoying his daughter, she makes him kiss the superb buttocks of a child one degree closer to him than the one he is sodomising. Victor, who no longer needs to be there, comes over and, whilst sodomising his father, places Verneuil between the two results of his balls. But the ferocity of this incestuous man, who cannot go a minute without sustenance, demands that Gernande whip Marceline before him—that is to say, the grandmother of the girl whose anus he is working on; and Gernande, whose bloodthirsty tastes are well known, wishes, to make him come more quickly, to use on this woman's fat arse nothing but a whip with iron spikes. "I'd love it," said Verneuil, still fucking, "if d'Esterval, just to really piss me off, were to grab my wife's arse in the position she's in now, and give her a proper thrashing." — "Couldn't I," said Bressac, "do the same for Laurette? Since she's in a similar position, I can grab her the same way." — "Certainly," replied Verneuil; "but then Dorothée will have to come and fuck Victor with her delightful clitoris." — "Fine," said John, "and I'll sodomise Dorothée." — "In front of you all," said Constant, "I shall, if you please, sodomise Justine." — "On condition," said Verneuil, "that you surround yourself with old hags who, by their posture, will offer me their arses to kiss." — "Nothing could be easier," said one of the old women, arranging everything; and we, she added, speaking of her three companions, shall walk the ranks, rods in hand, to arouse you further. "No, no," said Verneuil; "I'd rather they straddle me; I want the wrinkles of their old arses to form, alongside the beauties before my eyes, the most pleasing contrast to true lust. You'll shit, you bitches, do you hear me; you'll piss, you'll fart, whilst my cum flows." And with everything thus arranged,



the rascal, hard as a rock, wants to pluck both flowers at once. This bear's cruel plans are soon carried out, and poor little Rose, withered on all sides in a single instant, will bear both her shame and her tears to her mother's bosom.

Lili takes her place. The positions vary; yet the same lewdness shapes them, and the same vile acts season them. The climax draws near; astonishing blasphemies herald it: Verneuil ejaculates like a bull, and demands that, as he withdraws from his grandson's arse, it be Justine's mouth that cleanses his filthy member. "Take my place," he says to Victor; "my son, fuck my two children; I still feel strong enough to sodomise you during that time, provided my wife finger-fucks my arsehole, and I lick my sister's." New groups gather round these final excesses of lust; and, after a few moments of calm and refreshment, they proceed to the final act of these delightful orgies.

"Oh! just heaven! with what horrors will they end!"

A large five-seater armchair, designed so that those seated in it sit back-to-back, stands in the middle of the drawing room. Bressac, Gernande, Verneuil, d'Esterval and Dorothée take their seats in it. Each of them has a young lover seated between their legs; John, Constant and Victor flit about them. A circle surrounds this large armchair, leaving only a foot's width of space between the seat and the circle. Those forming this circle are Madame de Verneuil and Madame de Gernande, Justine, Laurette, Marceline, Cécile, Lili, Rose and the four old women, whom they have made to stand naked; all these wretched creatures are holding hands. Such is the state in which Gernande wishes them to be, so that all twelve may be bled at once from both arms, which will form twenty-four fountains, whose streams will splash upon the villains seated in the armchair. The two sorrowful wives wish to protest against the atrocity of these excesses; their remonstrances are laughed at, and the scene is nonetheless prepared. Verneuil desires refinement in it: "I want," he says, "my son Victor to bleed his mother and sisters himself." — "He has never touched a lancet in his life," cries Madame de

Verneuil. “— “All the better,” replies Gernande maliciously; “that is precisely what we need.” Young Victor, eager to take part in this wickedness, assures them he will manage it just as well as his uncle. The operation begins; Monsieur de Gernande rises and directs it; Victor begins under the gaze of his master, who, maliciously, jerks him off whilst he operates, so that lust, agitating his nerves, may force him to tremble and maim someone, Gernande finishes; the jets spurt almost simultaneously from every arm; the phlebotomist returns to take his place; and there are our five libertines, covered in blood, aroused by this spectacle, whilst their young lovers suck them, and Victor, rods in hand, walks round the circle in reverse, to prevent, by force of blows, the victims from losing consciousness. Nothing equals the audacity with which this madman strikes indiscriminately at every arse; brother, mother, sister—nothing is spared by his vigorous arm. Meanwhile, our libertines inside the circle are absolutely drenched in blood, as are the young lovers who amuse them; John and Constant, whose cocks they are stroking, are equally covered in it; never has it been seen to flow so abundantly. At that moment, Cécile staggers; she falls, despite all the efforts of those beside her to hold her up. “Ah!” says Verneuil, who had a raging hard-on at the sight, “ah! Goddamn it, I wager my daughter is lost; that little scatterbrain will have missed her: there he is, a fratricide, for his first attempt.” — “Nothing is more certain,” says Gernande. — “Ah! Double-damned-God,” said the young man, covering his dying sister’s face with cum, “damn-the-devil-I-don’t-give-a-damn-about-it, I’ve never had so much pleasure.” Here all arms sprang back into action in haste. Madame de Verneuil, absorbed in her daughter’s body, covered it with tears and kisses: they tried a few remedies, but their utter futility led them to abandon them just as quickly. Verneuil, quite consoled by this loss, for no one cared less than he for such a thing... especially when he was sated with it, Verneuil asked his son if he had done it on purpose. — “Not at all,” says the notorious scoundrel; “I beg you, dear father, to be quite convinced that,

had I had a victim to choose, it would have been your wife..." Everyone bursts out laughing... And that is how this young scoundrel was brought up; that is how he was gradually accustomed to the most heinous crimes. "Good heavens," said d'Esterval, "I'm sorry that this pretty girl is dying so soon; I had intended to sodomise her." — "Is it not still in time, then?" said Bressac. "By God, you're right," said the innkeeper; "hold her for me, and I'll give it to her." — "It is I, my friend," said Verneuil; "it is I who shall do you this service, in gratitude for all those your lovely wife has done for me;" and, seizing his dying daughter, he presented her to d'Esterval, who sodomised her at once. Each of these villains, in his own way and according to his tastes, seeks to indulge in equal atrocities; and one cannot imagine the abominations to which these monsters give themselves, up to the final moment, with that unfortunate little girl. Never did the cruellest peoples, nor the fiercest cannibals reach such a degree of horror and cruelty. She dies at last; and the terrace benches we mentioned earlier forever conceal the dreadful crime that has just been committed with as much audacity as frenzy.

Oh! What a passion is lust! If it is the most delightful of all those for which nature inspires a taste in us, one may well be certain that it is at the same time the strongest and the most dangerous.

Exhausted by fatigue, we finally went to bed. And Verneuil, to whom a new lustful idea immediately restored all his strength, as we have already said, was determined to spend the night with his daughter Laurette, who, of all those present, is the one most skilled in the art of arousing him. Everyone arranged themselves in much the same way; and Justine had the honour of sharing Dorothée's bed, who could not get enough of her.

## FIN DU TROISIÈME VOLUME.